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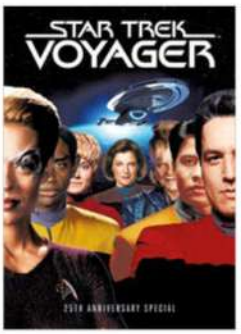

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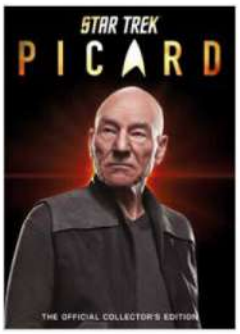

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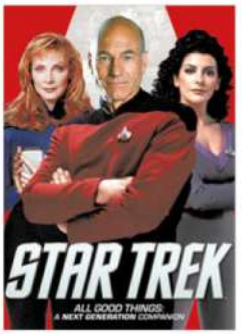

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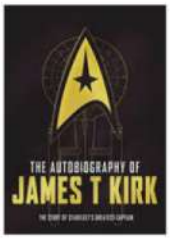

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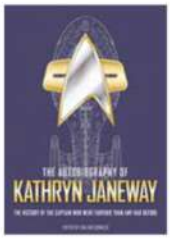

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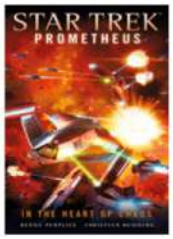

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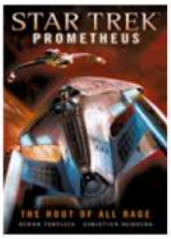

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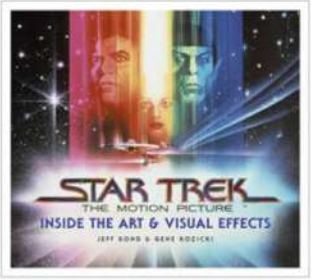

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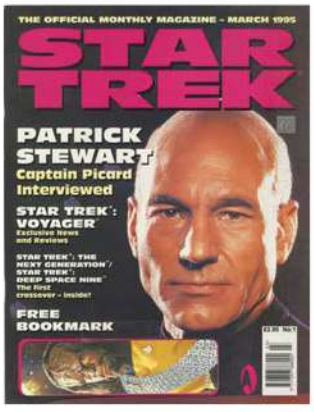
Captain's Log

Art: Nick Miller

Back in 1995, when I was editor of then *Star Trek Monthly*, who could have imagined I'd be returning to helm this marvellous magazine, recently reborn as *Star Trek Explorer* – once more?*

More to the point, back in 1995, who could have hoped that, 27 years on, there would be so much new *Star Trek* to savor? Not just the ongoing TV shows – *Discovery*, *Strange New Worlds*, *Lower Decks* and *Prodigy* - but books, comics, games, a plethora of merchandise and more.



Needless to say, it can be a bit overwhelming to even think about it, let alone try and keep track of it – but, as ever, that's what the team here at *Star Trek Explorer* will continue to do, steering you in the direction of new *Star Trek* delights, and investigating those we're already enjoying, with new cast and crew interviews, features and more.

That coverage continues this very issue, with a number of great interviews with new series cast. But, as promised, we are also paying tribute to the late Nichelle Nichols.

Today, it's perhaps hard to imagine what an impact the multi-racial cast of *Star Trek* had on television viewers when it first aired, but it certainly did; Nichols role as Lieutenant Uhura groundbreaking in so many ways, remarked on by several paying tribute within these pages.

We hope our coverage proves up to the considerable challenge of honoring a remarkable actress, who went on to encourage so many to take up jobs in science and exploration.

Looking forward, now, and there's plenty of that to do as we head, warp speed, toward 2023. Starting next issue, in fact, with the arrival of the third and final season of *Star Trek: Picard*, which looks like it's going to be a real blast, based on what's been teased so far.

Plus, of course, we'll be celebrating thirty years of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, with interviews, features, and short stories, too.

I hope you'll join us for the ride...

John Freeman
Editor

** Those of you who have been with us as long as I have will know this is actually my* third *tour of duty, as I did a stint a few years back, a "temporary" assignment, I was told... that ran for two years!*

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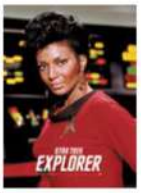

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Engage!

EXPLORING THE *STAR TREK* UNIVERSE

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

Honors Abound for *Strange New Worlds*

As if the overwhelmingly positive reaction from fans and critics was simply not enough for its electrifying first season, *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* has received significant accolades in recent months. The Hollywood Critics Association bestowed the Legacy Award upon the series, applauding its ability to continue *Star Trek*'s positive impact on pop culture.

While accepting the award, SNW's co-showrunner Henry Alonso Myers stated, "Every day in the writers' room, we try to imagine, '*How would Gene Roddenberry and his team make* The Original Series *if they were doing it* today?' They would use state-of-the-art visual effects, they would ask questions that deal with the politics of today, they would approach character thoughtfully… but most importantly, they would tell stories about the future that give us hope."

CBS CEO George Cheeks offered further praise for the five series created by Alex Kurtzman and his team in a publicly released statement that placed a particular focus on SNW, saying, "[The] franchise's newest edition, *Strange New Worlds*, is earning critical acclaim and delivering notable performance achievements on the service… We look forward to the franchise's continuing journey on Paramount+ here in the U.S. and globally."

Trek in Development

With *Discovery* (Season 5), *Strange New Worlds* (Season 2), *Picard* (Season 3), *Lower Decks* (Season 3), and *Prodigy* (Seasons 1–2) all either streaming or in-production, Alex Kurtzman confirmed that two additional *Star Trek* series are currently in development during the *Star Trek* Universe panel at San Diego Comic-Con in July. Since *Picard*'s final season is in post-production, it stands to reason that more *Star Trek* shows would be on the drawing board, but it was nevertheless refreshing to hear the words of affirmation from *Trek*'s flagship creator and producer.

Power Up the *Protostar*

Officially announced earlier this year by Outright Games, Tessera Studios, Paramount Consumer Products, and Nickelodeon, the interactive adventure video game *Star Trek Prodigy: Supernova* hit shelves in October. Based on the hit Paramount+ series *Star Trek: Prodigy* and its hero ship *U.S.S. Protostar*, the game serves as an excellent companion to the show and taps *Prodigy*'s entire voice cast to reprise their animated roles.

Fans can play as Dal or Gwyn in either single-player or two-player cooperative mode, learn about new alien species, and customize the *Protostar* as they set out to rescue the rest of their crew. Like its namesake series, *Supernova* is family-friendly and designed with the enjoyment of younger players in mind. Priced at $39.99, *Star Trek Prodigy: Supernova* is currently available for PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Nintendo Switch, Xbox One, and Xbox X|S, as well as for PCs via Steam.

Supernova Novels

Can't get enough of *Star Trek: Prodigy* or its accompanying video game, *Supernova*? Then prepare for the January 2023 release of two *Prodigy* middle-grade novels! Written by Robb Pearlman, *Supernova* is based on the video game of the same name and follows Dal and Gwyn as they attempt to find their friends before a nearby star goes supernova! Meanwhile, Cassandra Rose Clarke's *A Dangerous Game* tells the tale of rogue traders trying to take the *U.S.S. Protostar* for themselves! Both books can be pre-ordered at SimonAndSchuster.com.

The Emissary's Emergence

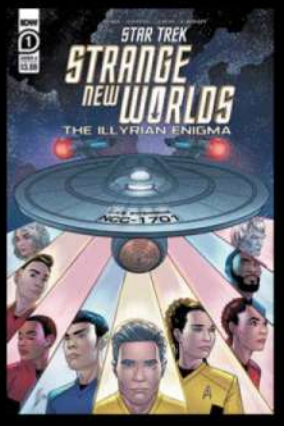
Announced by IDW at San Diego Comic Con, *Star Trek #1* kicks off a new comic series that features the Emissary himself, Captain Benjamin Lafayette Sisko. Having emerged from the Bajoran Wormhole, Sisko has the power to recruit characters from all eras, timelines, and universes throughout *Star Trek* to accompany him on a mission to protect the Prophets.

Written by Collin Kelly and Jackson Lanzing, *Star Trek #1* features art by Ramon Rosanas. Sisko's crew also includes at least two additional notable *Trek* alumni in the form of Doctor Crusher and Data. *Star Trek #1* is the beginning of an incredible new adventure and has the potential to bring together all sorts of unique character matchups. The first issue was released in October and the series is available from all comic retailers.

Resurgence's Comic Companion

Based on Dramatic Labs' upcoming interactive video game *Star Trek: Resurgence*, IDW launched a five-issue comic book prequel miniseries this month (November) written by Andrew Grant and Dan Martin, with art by Josh Hood. *Star Trek: Resurgence #1* features three variant covers by Hood, Dramatic Labs, and Malachi Ward, and is available at all comic retailers.

Strange New Worlds comic launches



December 2023 sees the launch of *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds – The Illyrian Enigma*, set between the show's first season and its second season.

The four-issue series is written by SNW co-executive producer Kirsten Beyer and Mike Johnson, with art by Megan Levens, colored by Charlie Kirchoff.

Captain Kirk's *Enterprise*

Donated by Paramount Studios in 1974 and showcased in the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum until 2019, the filming model for the *Constitution*-class *U.S.S. Enterprise* from *The Original Series* has finally received clearance to depart "space dock" (also known as the Smithsonian's storage area) and was able to warp back onto public display in the museum this past October.

Fans of James T. Kirk's earliest adventures as the *Enterprise*'s captain will surely recognize the model as the one that was depicted orbiting countless alien worlds as various landing parties beamed down to the planets below, encountered new civilizations, and explored the final frontier.

For all the information you need to know in order to check out this piece of television history in person, visit the museum's official site at AirAndSpace.si.edu.

The Magic of Matt Jefferies

Designed by *Star Trek* icon Walter "Matt" Jefferies, the original *U.S.S. Enterprise* filming model measured in at approximately 11 feet in length and was primarily constructed from poplar wood. Used during the initial three-season run of *The Original Series*, this design eventually gave way to the equally beloved *Constitution*-class refit which would be introduced in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and appear in all six films centered around Captain Kirk and his Prime Timeline crew.

A Bounty of Badges

From *The Original Series* era through the 32nd century, Starfleet's signature delta badge has been seen on the front of Federation uniforms and undergone a myriad of design changes. Beginning with *The Next Generation*, the badges also served as comm devices and locator beacons, while built-in tricorders, holographic PADDs, and personal transporters became commonplace by the year the *U.S.S. Discovery* arrived in a post-Burn galaxy.

Despite the iterations that have spanned centuries and jumped across universes, FanSets has diligently worked to supply Trekkies with high-quality pins that serve every *Trek* series. The multi-pin Memorial Badge set, which is priced at $119.95, features twelve pins that acted as commemorative badges honoring the *Enterprise* crew's previous starship assignments in the *Strange New World* episode, "Memento Mori." The set is filled with familiar names, from Captain Georgiou's *U.S.S. Shenzhou* to the 'fallen' *U.S.S. Discovery*.

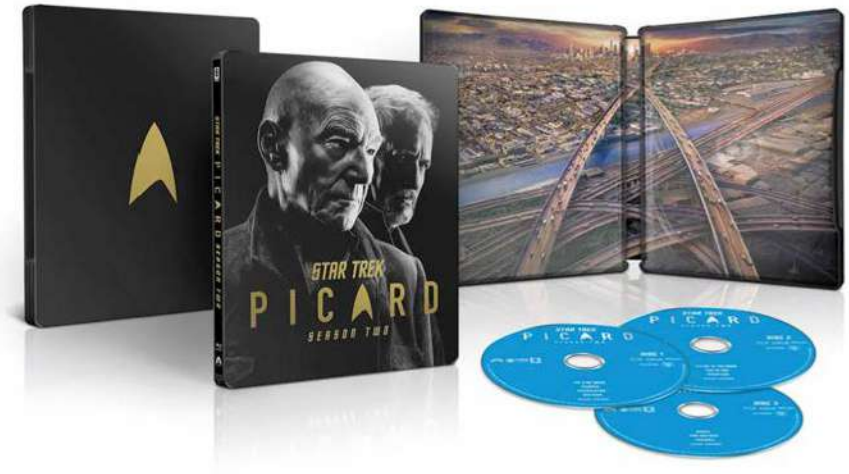
Other prominent additions to the FanSets line include the *U.S.S. Protostar* badge from *Prodigy*, *Picard*'s Confederation of Earth delta variant, the three *U.S.S. Enterprise* division badges from *Strange New Worlds*, *Deep Space Nine*'s Bajoran Militia combadge, and *The Next Generation*'s unique alternate delta that was seen in the fictional future depicted in "Future Imperfect" and one of the realities visited by Worf in "Parallels."

Remembering David Warner and Paul Sorvino

Our *Star Trek* family, as well as the world at large, mourned upon learning about the death of actor, activist, and trailblazer Nichelle Nichols, who of course played Lieutenant Uhura in *The Original Series*. Unfortunately, tragedy also struck our tight-knit community when prolific talents and screen legends David Warner and Paul Sorvino passed away.

Warner's storied career included stage, television, and film projects. While his first contribution to *Trek* was as St. John Talbot in *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*, Warner is perhaps best known for two of the most memorable guest spots in *Trek* history: Chancellor Gorkon in *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* and Gul Madred in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s "Chain of Command" two-parter. Whether commanding respect as a Klingon leader in search of peace or evoking villainy as a brutal Cardassian interrogator, Warner captivated audiences with every performance.

Sorvino's brilliance was equally apparent, as he brought his skills to bear on roles that ranged from *Goodfellas* to *Law & Order*. Sorvino guest starred as Worf's adoptive brother, Nikolai Rozhenko, who challenged the validity of the Federation's prized Prime Directive in TNG's "Homeward." *Explorer* extends its deepest condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of Nichols, Warner, and Sorvino.



Picard Beams Into Homes Worldwide

Star Trek: Picard's stellar sophomore season has arrived on Blu-ray, DVD, and limited-edition Blu-ray Steelbook throughout the United States. Fear not, people of Earth, as these releases will soon roll out in Japan, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and other parts of Europe. Each version includes the 10-episode season, plus over an hour of bonus features.

A gag reel and deleted scenes headline the extra material from the time-twisting adventure, but other outstanding material includes featurettes on the creation of the *U.S.S. Stargazer*, the design of Picard's chateau, a behind-the-scenes jaunt with John de Lancie, turning Annie Wersching into the Borg Queen, information about the props that were used onscreen, and more! This set furnishes the perfect way to fill our days while we await the excitement of *Picard*'s third and final season.

The Wrath Returns

In celebration of *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*'s 40th anniversary, the director's cut of the classic film temporarily returned to theatres throughout the United States for a special three-day run this past September. Courtesy of Fathom Events, Turner Classic Movies, and Paramount Pictures, this momentous occasion presented fans with the chance to either relive their movie-going experience from 1982 or watch the film on the big screen for the very first time. To paraphrase Admiral James T. Kirk, it was truly a "win-win" scenario.

Jessica Danecker on Engaging the Gorn

"I remember thinking that it was incredibly cool that this creature that has so much history in the franchise would be the cause of her demise," says Jessica Danecker, whose character Cadet Chia was killed by a Gorn in *Strange New Worlds*. "My first impression while holding the baby Gorn puppet – thank you to our puppeteers who were kind enough to let us do that, by the way – was, *Oh my gosh, how can these things be so detailed and unsettling?*"

"The amazing part is that the Gorn emerging from Buckley's back was happening in real time during the scene, thanks to our puppeteer who was controlling it's every move," exclaims Danecker. "So the reaction I [gave] was truly in response to seeing this terrifying little creature appear."

Danecker expressed overwhelming gratitude for the SNW experience. "It's so rare that you get to work in a genre like this, with so many different creatives coming together to make something so captivating," begins the actor. "The crew went out of their way to make you feel comfortable, and every cast member was so inviting and generous in their work. Just so many genuine people in one show. I'm still pinching myself over being a part of the *Star Trek* legacy."

A Voyage of Discovery

Before the *U.S.S. Discovery* ventured far into the future, Michael Burnham had put her court martial behind her and honorably served as a commander aboard the *Crossfield*-class starship. EXO-6, which has gradually been building an impressive series of 1:6 scale *Star Trek* figures, and has added Commander Burnham to its outstanding line up. Wearing the mid-2250s blue Starfleet uniform from *Disco*'s first two seasons, the 1:6 Scale Articulated Figure stands roughly 11 1/4-inches tall and comes fully equipped with a hand phaser, tricorder, communicator, and phaser rifle.

Had Burnham not traveled through time in a bid to defeat Control, she might have stayed in Starfleet long enough to meet a young officer named Tuvok in the late 23rd century. Of course, the Vulcan is better known for his tenure aboard the *U.S.S. Voyager* during its jaunt through the Delta Quadrant in the 2370s. EXO-6's Lt. Commander Tuvok 1:6 Scale Figure reflects his service on *Voyager*, portraying the tactical officer in his gold and black security uniform with period accurate phaser, tricorder, PADD, and phaser rifle.

One notable Starfleet alumni who Tuvok *did* meet was Captain Hikaru Sulu, as the two shared a tour of duty on the *U.S.S. Excelsior* during the Khitomer Crisis. However, Tuvok would hardly recognize Sulu's mirror universe counterpart, who Captain Kirk encountered following a transporter accident in the 2260s. EXO-6's Mirror Sulu dons the Terran Empire's red security chief garb and carries the Empire's signature dagger.

EXO-6's Commander Michael Burnham figure ($215) can be purchased right now, whereas Lt. Commander Tuvok ($198) and Mirror Sulu ($198) are up for pre-order. Each of these figures can be found at EXO-6.com.

Assemble Your Fleet

The team behind Modiphius Entertainment's popular roleplaying game *Star Trek Adventures* has engineered the creation of *Utopia Planitia Starfleet Sourcebook*, a fantastic tome outlining Starfleet history and detailed starship rundowns that provides visually stunning images and a great read for gamers and non-gamers alike. The sourcebook offers gamemaster advice, insight on starship operations, and updated game statistics and graphics for over 70 vessels, space stations, and shuttles.

The reference guide comes in three variants: a standard cover edition ($54.32) with space dock art by Tobias Richter, a TOS Collector's Edition ($78.46), and a TNG Collector's Edition ($78.46). While physical copies are set to be shipped out in late 2022, you can receive a free PDF of the sourcebook if you pre-order your copy now at Modiphius.net. Gamers can also secure other important resources, such as the *Star Trek Adventures: Core Rulebook* and the *Star Trek Adventures Starter Set*, on the Modiphius website.

Strange New Incursions

Prepare to engage the enemy! The mobile strategy game *Star Trek Fleet Command* continues to offer exciting upgrades for its player base. The most notable news revolves around the introduction of Infinite Incursions, a new event type which pits game servers against one another in one-on-one invasion scenarios. The stakes are high, as the server that emerges victorious in each incursion event will receive both individual and server-wide in-game rewards.

Recent updates to *Fleet Command*'s arc based on the hit series *Strange New Worlds* include an infusion of characters from the show, as well as 20 fresh missions that allow you to team up with Captain Pike and the *Enterprise* crew, five missions involving a new starship called the *Mantis*, and 35 episodic side-missions that will pair you with various SNW officers.

As *Fleet Command* builds upon its immersive gameplay, be sure to visit StarTrekFleetCommand.com to read up on the latest updates, connect with other players, and learn how you can join in on the fun by playing the game.

Taking Command

As seen in *Star Trek: Picard*, the early 25th century *U.S.S. Stargazer* is now available for use in *Star Trek Online* and can be found under the Sagan Command Cruiser moniker. You can now control the same class of vessel that led the Starfleet task force which confronted the mysterious Borg vessel in the second season's premiere and finale episodes.

More information can be found at PlayStarTrekOnline.com

Resurgence

Building upon the wave of excitement for Dramatic Labs' upcoming interactive video game, *Star Trek: Resurgence*, a five-issue comic book prequel of the same name launched this month from IDW. Exploring the calamitous events of the *U.S.S. Resolute* preceding the game's main storyline, the miniseries is written by Andrew Grant and Dan Martin, with art by Josh Hood (*Avatar: The Next Shadow, We Can Never Go Home*).

WORDS: JOHN FREEMAN

On a windswept planet bordering the notoriously hostile Talarian Republic, a scientist on the cusp of developing technology that will revolutionize warp goes missing. The crew of the *U.S.S. Resolute* is tasked with an urgent stealth mission to recover Dr. Leah Brahms and keep her research out of enemy hands...

"I can't wait for fans to have a truly immersive game experience on the bridge of the *U.S.S. Resolute* and discover the formative events that indelibly shaped the ship and crew via the comic books,"

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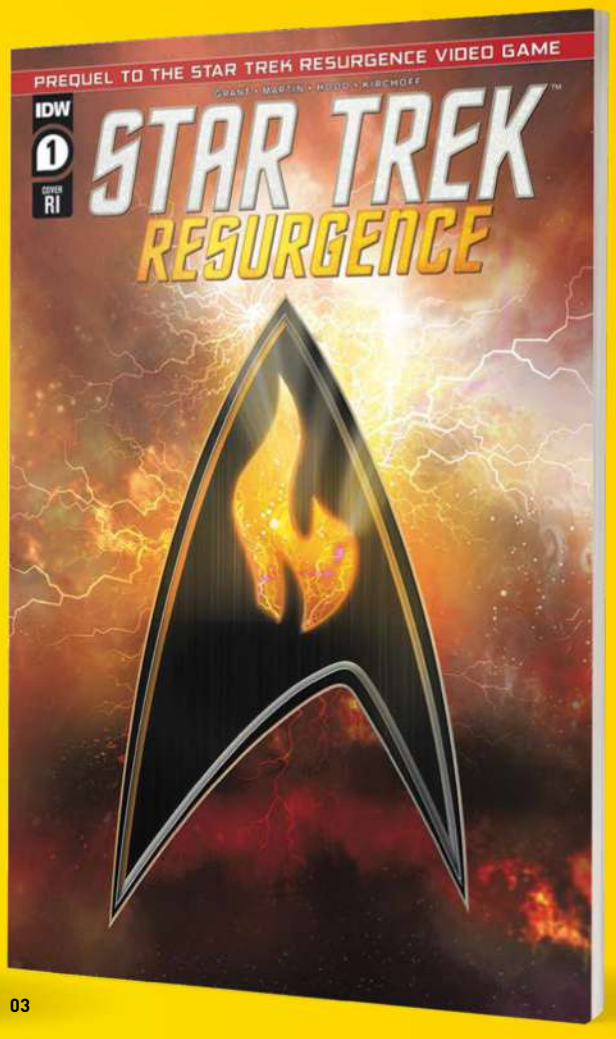

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says Grant. "I'm grateful to have worked on a franchise that is genuinely hopeful about the future, that takes into consideration the needs of the many, and views diversity as a singular source of strength."

"I really wanted to spend more time with the crew of the *U.S.S. Resolute*, so I'm thrilled to take fans on another adventure in this prequel comic," added Martin. "There are some familiar faces along for the ride and as a longtime *Star Trek* fan myself, it's sometimes hard to believe that I actually get to bring life to characters which I first met on TV decades ago."

"Drawing *Star Trek* is a bit of a double-edged sword. The iconography is burned into the minds of so many fans that when you get something wrong — the phasers, the bridge of a starship, the comms badges — it's instantly recognizable as being wrong. But when you get it right, the entire experience of being in the 24th century seems to slide right into place," says Hood.

"The universe is vast in the 24th century, and any opportunity we have to explore the stories of characters that don't always make it to the big screen gives us a freedom to do things in the comics we don't always get to do," says editor Heather Antos. "Combined with Dan and Andrew's experience working on the game itself, alongside Josh's clear love of *Trek*, *Star Trek: Resurgence* is blasting off into brand-new corners of the *Star Trek* comics universe."

01 Star Trek: Resurgence #1 Cover A art by Josh Hood

02 Star Trek: Resurgence #1 Cover B art by Dramatic Labs

03 Star Trek: Resurgence #1 Cover C art by Malachi Ward

***Star Trek: Resurgence* #1 was released in November 2022 with three variant covers for fans and retailers to enjoy, including Cover A by series illustrator Hood, Cover B by Dramatic Labs, and a retailer incentive variant by Malachi Ward.**

01

I AM PECK

Ethan Peck's *Star Trek* journey is at four years and counting. As impossible, even illogical as it sounds, it's true. The news broke on August 14, 2018, that the actor had been cast as Spock, the foster brother of Michael Burnham, for the second season of *Star Trek: Discovery*. Peck slipped on his Vulcan ears and never looked back, playing the half-human/half-Vulcan character in *Discovery*, in the "Q&A" and "Ask Not" installments of *Short Treks*, and now on *Strange New Worlds*. Peck has done a virtuoso job of bringing to life a younger, not-yet-fully-formed Spock, yet a Spock who could evolve into Leonard Nimoy's iconic iteration of the character.

INTERVIEW BY IAN SPELLING

While production of season two of *Strange New Worlds* was still in session, Peck took a break from shooting to speak exclusively with *Star Trek Explorer*. Over the course of a half-hour, Peck looked back at his time on *Discovery*, addressed the challenges of playing a Spock who still evinces emotion, revealed how immersing himself in Spock has changed him, and shared what he'd ask Nimoy if he could talk to his predecessor.

What were your expectations or hopes when all of this started with *Discovery*?
Peck: My expectations were to get fired and to fail, to be quite honest with you, and my hopes were to end up on Pike's *Enterprise*.

You really thought you might fail?
Peck: I felt so unproven at the time. I didn't have a lot of experience. So, I just wasn't sure how it was going to fare. I put a lot of pressure on myself. I guess I could call myself a recovering perfectionist at this point in time, and that's not good for creativity in art-making. I had a lot of things to work through. I was given this opportunity to do that when I was cast in *Discovery* as Spock. That's not something everyone gets the opportunity to do, to rise to an occasion.

How proud are you that you pulled it off?
Peck: I'm proud. It's been an incredible journey so far, and it feels like it's only just beginning. Being on *Discovery* almost felt like a preamble to what's been happening on *Strange New Worlds* - for me personally - and it's ongoing. I feel like I'm starting to find a groove, all these years later.

What worked best for you in terms of how Spock's arc, especially his relationship with Michael, was concluded?

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Peck: I didn't watch all of it. I'm put off by seeing myself on camera and that often ends with me missing my friends' performances, unfortunately. I guess I was satisfied. I didn't know what to expect. I had an amazing time there. I learned so much working with Sonequa Martin-Green. The rest of the cast are experienced, incredible, and fantastic actors. I don't have much of an opinion about how the arc turned out. Spock was out of his mind and that was challenging to play. I'm glad he got out of it.

Fans took such a liking to Spock, Pike, and Number One on *Discovery* and *Short Treks* that they practically willed *Strange New Worlds* into existence. What was it like to have a front-row seat as Paramount+/CBS said, "We have to do this. Let's go"?
Peck: I don't read too many reviews or responses online, so I was tangentially aware that fans wanted it. Anson [Mount] and I did as many conventions as we could the year following the completion of *Discovery* season two. As the show started to air, we started what I call our convention tour. That's what it was for me. I saw it as campaigning for our own show and I think I contributed to it getting green-lit, but I have no idea. I don't know if there was a plan all along for them to do it.

When I auditioned for, and got the role of, Spock on *Discovery*, it was a recurring guest-star role. It wasn't a regular role. Oftentimes, when you're auditioning for a regular role on a television show, you go through a testing process and you're approved by the network. It seemed less formal than that. Maybe they had it in their minds from the beginning, I have no idea, but I'm still on a ride.

It's hard for me to have perspective on it all, because it happened so quickly. We did lose a year because of the pandemic. I'm still clamoring to catch up with myself, this journey, and this process of playing Spock, being on *Strange New Worlds*. When I wrap season two, I'll have a moment to step back and be like, "Whoa, that was crazy." I look forward to having some proper time off, but it's dreamlike. It's surreal. I pinch myself. I feel incredibly lucky, and grateful. I look around at the world and I feel so fortunate. I don't have words for how that feels.

01 Jess Bush as Christine Chapel in "The Serene Squall".

02 Ethan Peck as Spock, aboard the *Enterprise*.

An aspect of your performance people appreciate is that we see flashes of happiness, frustration, humor, anger, and affection. How freeing – or not – is it for you to portray a Spock who's not quite yet Nimoy's Spock?
Peck: It's not very freeing. You might think that because there might be a wider spectrum of emotions that he seems to be feeling, but playing Spock is like walking on a tightrope in a lot of ways. It's so constricting. I can't gesticulate and have full-fledged feelings. Even if it's just Spock sharing information on the bridge and being stentorian, there's still a lot going on for him, but it's tamped down by his Vulcan-ness. No matter the emotion that's going on beneath, it still needs to be controlled and constricted. That's challenging. It's even more difficult when it's human feelings like, "Oh, Spock's happy right now." Those moments can be difficult for me to play because I have to work so much against my own personality and natural qualities.

> "MY EXPECTATIONS WERE TO GET FIRED AND TO FAIL, TO BE QUITE HONEST WITH YOU, AND MY HOPES WERE TO END UP ON PIKE'S *ENTERPRISE*."

Which relationships did you enjoy exploring in season one?
Peck: Exploring the relationship between Spock and T'Pring was exciting and fun. Gia Sandhu, who played T'Pring, is wonderful and we had a great time. Of course, the love triangle is completed by Spock's burgeoning interest in Nurse Chapel. There was the moment where, in order to bluff, Spock kissed Chapel on the bridge. Spock realized he liked that. Working with Jess Bush was wonderful. It was also fun.

One of my personal favorite episodes, from my experience, because I haven't seen it, was episode seven ("The Serene Squall"). Working with Jesse James Keitel, who played Aspen, that was a cool relationship to build out and explore. The character was non-binary and they advised Spock to see himself as more than human and Vulcan. In Spock's mind, he's binary. He's either human, or he's Vulcan. This is a period of time in his life where he's trying to reconcile those parts of him and Aspen inspired him to think, "Maybe I'm something more. Maybe I'm more than human. Maybe these two components of myself combined will make something different and greater."

That is what I think we see in Leonard Nimoy's Spock in TOS, on Captain Kirk's *Enterprise*. That was interesting to explore, existentially, and Jesse is an amazing talent and was fun to work with.

"Spock Amok" let you fight yourself. You engaged in a *Freaky Friday* body-swapping scenario with Gia Sandhu. We heard a reference to I-Chaya, the Selat. You don't watch the episodes, but we heard Gerald Fried's "Amok Time" fight theme. What elements, in terms of Vulcan history, interested you?
Peck: That's a great question. Calling back to the constriction of Spock's human side, I remember doing those scenes and thinking, "This is an ancient ritual. This is ingrained in my DNA." I'm speaking from the perspective of Spock now. "This is something thrumming through generations of Vulcans on this planet. I'm different." The clashing of those cultures in that moment for me felt profound and provocative. Spock often feels like an imposter on his planet, and on Earth.

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He doesn't quite belong anywhere, in his mind, which is why the Federation and Starfleet, are such perfect places for him. He feels at home. At the end of that episode, there's a line when he's speaking with T'Pring and says, "I'm quite simply Spock. I'm not Vulcan. I'm not human. I'm Spock. I'm myself. I'm something unique and unusual outside of these two parts." I thought of Vulcan history as something that I felt outside of. That was such a strange and inspiring perspective to have for those moments.

Where does the season one finale, "A Quality of Mercy," leave Spock as we head toward season two?
Peck: Ready to keep going. We left things open-ended for more adventures. At least that's where Spock is at. He's also more open to his human side that we're constantly attempting to crack open; what that is to him, how it's useful or not, and how it will become a part of Spock on TOS.

04 T'Pring **(Gia Sandhu). with** Spock (Ethan Peck) in an opening scene on Vulcan, in the first episode of *Strange New Worlds*.

05 Spock with Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green) in the second season Discovery episode, "If Memory Serves".

06 A scene from the *Strange New Worlds* episode, " A Quality of Mercy"

In what ways would you say playing Spock has changed you? Are you more logical?
Peck: Definitely more logical, or less so, I'm not sure anymore. He's changed me in a lot of ways. I said earlier, my expectations when I was cast on *Discovery* were to get fired. I'm joking, but I was nervous about failing. Generally, those thoughts aren't useful unless you want to be failing. There's that great quote, "Sow a thought and reap an action." Spock would never think that way. If he realizes that something becomes not useful and has no utility, he dispenses with it. So, I needed to change the way I was thinking. We have time in the day to do things, but we also have time to think about things. From the moment you wake up, you have the opportunity to fill your mind, with thoughts or visions of what you wish to accomplish, of nice things to make you feel good or bad things to feel bad. Some of us fall into that habit. Spock is so pure in his mindset, and that's rubbed off on me in the best way. There are tons of self-help books I could draw comparisons to but that I've not read, *The Secret* and things like that, where you take control of your mind and your focus. It's very tied in with meditation practice. I just have to become more clear-headed.

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How ready are you for a few more seasons of *Strange New Worlds*?
Peck: I'm ready, and very excited. If we get a few more seasons, I'd be over the moon.

If I could magically arrange for you to chat with Leonard Nimoy, what would you want to ask him about Spock, or his years with *Trek*?
Peck: That's a question I've not been asked before. If I could ask him anything, what would I ask? There are so many things. "How was it?" "Are you happy?" "What's your favorite thing about Spock?" "What did you hate about Spock?" "Do you feel like Spock?" I'd ask him all the questions you just asked me. "How has Spock changed you?" "Are you tired of it?" "Do you want to keep doing it?" So many questions…

How interested would you be, at some point, in directing – and to do so with your family of cast and crew on *Strange New Worlds*?

"I'M PUT OFF BY SEEING MYSELF ON CAMERA AND THAT OFTEN ENDS WITH ME MISSING MY FRIENDS' PERFORMANCES, UNFORTUNATELY. I GUESS I WAS SATISFIED. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT."

Peck: I have a story about that. Jonathan Frakes directed an episode, and he came up to me. He said, "When are you going to start directing?" It was seemingly out of the blue. I enjoy acting, and I feel I have so much more to learn and experience before (stepping behind the camera). But it got me curious about the possibility of directing. If I were to direct, it'd be such a dream to do it on *Strange New Worlds*. But it's only a seed of an idea for me at the moment. It seems like it'd be fun and I might have an aptitude for it.

A NOBLE SACRIFICE

Hemmer, we hardly knew you. *Star Trek* fans quickly came to love Hemmer, the *Enterprise*'s cantankerous, blind, and telepathic Aenar chief engineer on *Strange New Worlds*, but the character met a heroic end in "All Those Who Wander," the ninth episode of the show's first season. Bringing Hemmer to life – and to death – was Canadian actor Bruce Horak...

WORDS: IAN SPELLING

Bruce Horak is more than an actor. He bills himself as a "Visually Impaired Performer Creator," which encompasses acting on stage and in television and films, writing plays, composing music, and painting portraits. And he does all of this despite having lost 91 percent of his vision due to cancer when he was a toddler. *Star Trek Explorer* recently chatted with Horak about Hemmer's highlights and demise, the reaction he's gotten from fans, what comes next in his career, and more.

What made you want to pursue performing?
I was a class clown. I was in elementary school, goofing around in class. That was when it hit me. Also, I have a very artistic family. My dad was a high school English and drama teacher. My mom is a writer, painter, and singer. I have three older brothers who are artistically inclined. It's always been in the blood. I saw a play when I was in elementary school. They set up in the gymnasium, this company in Calgary called Quest Theater, which tours children's shows. I thought, "That's what I want to do. I want to tell stories. I want to perform." Years later, I went to theater school, met the artistic director of Quest Theater, and we hit it off. I became a writer and performer.

How familiar were you with *Trek*?
My whole family gathered on Sunday nights and watched TOS reruns. When *Next Generation* came out, my dad had just retired. We watched it. My dad was a science-fiction nerd, so it was mandatory.

How did *Strange New Worlds* come your way?

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My manager sent me the sides. Casting was looking for a blind or visually impaired performer, so I fit that requirement. When I found out it was an Aenar, I re-watched *Enterprise*. I dug into that first scene. The original sides were for the scene where Uhura and Hemmer meet. I believe I did three, maybe four Zoom auditions. After the last audition, I chatted with [Executive Producer] Henry Alonso Myers. We talked about the character and he told me, right off the bat, that he's going to be a mentor to Uhura, going to be blind but exceptional, and going to sacrifice himself. I knew early that Hemmer was an Obi-Wan Kenobi character, if you will.

I had no idea all the way through the first season what the sacrifice would look like. When I read the script, I was excited. I knew he was going to go, and I just wanted it to be cool and meaningful. He steps up and does this incredibly noble thing to save his friends. It was heartbreaking because, obviously, I wanted Hemmer to live forever, but let's make room for the next engineer!

Hemmer was great at his job, and he knew it. He didn't want anyone's help, or pity. How much did you relate to him?

Growing up with a disability meant running twice as fast just to stay in the middle of the pack a lot of the time. I was told at a young age, "This is a sighted world. It's up to you to adapt." That often meant relying on help, but also finding a way to be autonomous. That became a mantra of mine, and it still is. I like the feeling that I can get up and say, "I need to do these things." I totally relate to Hemmer, in terms of not wanting anybody's pity. When I walk around with my cane, I can sense that "Gosh, look at that poor man" reaction and it directly correlates to the sense of autonomy. "If I can do this thing myself, if I can perform the task that's required of me as a human being on this planet, then I'll shatter those feelings of pity because I'm competent and capable."

"I TOTALLY RELATE TO HEMMER, IN TERMS OF NOT WANTING ANYBODY'S PITY."

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It was incredibly moving to see Hemmer be so competent and capable. Also, he performed a heroic act. I don't believe someone *is* a hero. I believe we're human beings performing heroic acts. He's given that opportunity and steps up. I thought, "Well, that's shattering some expectations." Especially when you see a little bit of that flavor of what it means to be a pacifist. Here he is, in the beginning, saying, "Look, I'm not going to fight for Starfleet, but I'll fight for the ideals."

Working together is one of those incredible ideals. Sacrifice got hammered in all through season one; what it means to sacrifice and the sacrifices we all perform in life. Then he actually stepped up and sacrificed his life. It was incredibly meaningful.

How did the show's production team accommodate your challenges while still letting you be you, starting with using CGI vs contact lenses for Hemmer's eyes?

That was a big one. I couldn't wear contact lenses. They rolled with that from the beginning. It had been a conversation about dialogue and accommodation; what they could possibly do to make my life easier. It meant, for instance, having an assistant with me every time I went from the trailer to set. When I was on set, there'd be people stepping in to say, "Hey, there's a cable here" or "Watch the light here. We will move you in this direction." Everywhere I turned there was an offer or an arm. It made the whole process so comfortable. I knew if I could feel that confidence, that I'd project it through Hemmer. As soon as I walked on set, it was like, "Oh, it's all taken care of. I'm confident now. I can go out and do my job."

01 Previous spread: Bruce Horak as Hemmer, in a scene from "All Those Who Wander"

02 Bruce Horak (Hemmer) with Uhura (Celia Rose Gooding) between takes during shoot of *Strange New Worlds* Episode Two, "Children of the Comet"

03 Trouble ahead aplenty for the Away Team, in "All Those Who Wander"

What reaction have you gotten from fans who are blind or dealing with their own physical challenges?

I've gotten a lot of fans reaching out through social media, identifying as blind or visually impaired. Unanimously, it is a celebration of representation in the show. It was so great, and then it was – and is – a sharing of their own journey with *Star Trek*. It was a huge "Thank you and best wishes" and "We want to see more Hemmer-centric episodes, please."

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You had great scenes with Celia Rose Gooding as Uhura in "Memento Mori". Tell us about working with her…
Celia has a theater background, as do I. Coming from that world, we bonded quickly because it was such a short period of time to put a show on. Someone in the theater family says, "These are the people you're going to go into the trenches with, so let's have a good time." Celia was just fun. Off-camera, we had a blast. It was an instant connection. That made it so much easier to play Hemmer. After episode four, he was softer and less gruff. What a prickly pear Hemmer was in the first few episodes. It was easy to soften, because of Celia.

You were not in episodes five, six, and seven, but eight – "The Elysian Kingdom" – must have been entertaining to work on…
They went on a fantasy-realm adventure. The book Dr. M'Benga read to his daughter came to life and all of the ship's personnel became characters from the book. Hemmer became a wizard, but because he couldn't see what he was wearing and because of the telepathy -- he blocked out the story – he essentially remained himself. He got to play a little bit with M'Benga, and that was a riot. We didn't see Hemmer's humor coming through until then, and that was so fun. I got to play a wizard, which was all of my *Dungeons & Dragons* fantasies come to life.

04 The away team explore the crashed ship in "All Those Who Wander"

05 Doctor M'Benga (Babs Olusanmokun) with Hemmer, "The Eysian Kingdom".

06 The *Enterprise* crew honor Hemmer

Did did knowing that Hemmer would die in "All Those Who Wander" influence your performance, as you built toward his death?
I didn't know how it was going to happen, just that he was going to go. I was given a pretty clear indication it'd be a sacrifice, so I immediately thought of the mentor figures I was familiar with, like Obi-Wan Kenobi, and looked at some of those archetypal journeys. Such characters tend to start off as the reluctant gunslinger who teaches the young one to achieve their mission, which softens them up at some point to the degree that we see a connection. Through that connection, they sacrifice themselves. I thought, "Well, the best place to start is being grumpy and aloof because it'll give me somewhere to go." I hadn't read the scripts, but I assumed that it'd be noble and cool. It was so satisfying, and actually better than what I had imagined.

I was given the opportunity in those scenes to say goodbye to Uhura, Spock (Ethan Peck), La'an (Christina Chong), everyone. What an incredible moment, and gift to an actor to get to say goodbye, because oftentimes – like those early red shirts – someone makes a mistake and they're gone. This guy got to have that moment to say goodbye and put his house in order, which was something my dad said before he died. They gave him a year to live and right before he went, he said, "I'm just so glad that I had the year to get the house in order, and to say goodbye." I happened to know that feeling, being with my dad before he passed away, and watching how someone who feels like they've

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achieved their life's purpose would go.

How satisfied were you with the actual sacrifice?
He got infected with Gorn eggs and was going to hatch, basically. He made the decision to lock everyone out of the cargo bay, walked to the end and jumped off the back of the ship. Before that, he said goodbye to everyone. I was very satisfied.

What was it like on set after you finished your big scene?
It was very emotional for me. It wasn't a big celebration. We were in the middle of a long day. I believe they were going to flip around to do other shots. When I got wrapped that day, I breathed a heavy sigh because it was incredibly emotional.

We know that dead doesn't necessarily mean dead on *Trek*. How hopeful are you that we might see Hemmer again? If not, they could bring you back as a different character, perhaps a human...

I'd be so down. There are many examples of actors throughout the franchise who came back either as some other incarnation of their characters or in other roles. Honestly, Hemmer was such a delight to play. The challenge of playing another alien species, of throwing some of my vocal work in there, changing up the mask and the character, and hopefully disappearing so completely... that would be amazing. I also love the franchise, so any opportunity to come and play in the Federation is most welcome.

Let's talk about your portraiture work. You're on your way to 1,000 portraits...
I'm on my way to 1,000 portraits in my "The Way I See It" acrylic portrait series that I started in 2011. I work to interpret the way that I see. Having 9% vision, I get asked a lot, "Bruce, how do you see the world?" So, I started painting portraits of people to capture that. I take the acrylic paint, put it on canvas, and then sit and have a conversation, in person or over Zoom or FaceTime. I connect with people one-on-one, and have actual conversations. At the end, there's a piece of art that gets added to the ever-expanding gallery. I'll likely do way more than 1,000 because I absolutely love it.

If *Strange New Worlds* leads to more acting opportunities, what roles do you want to play?
I'm up for anything. I got into acting so that I could play other people. The experience of stepping into someone else's shoes, exercising empathy and compassion... any time I'm given the opportunity to do that I feel like my understanding of people expands. Playing someone who is radically different gives me the opportunity to experience the world through someone else's eyes.

"I THOUGHT, 'WELL, THE BEST PLACE TO START IS BEING GRUMPY AND ALOOF BECAUSE IT'LL GIVE ME SOMEWHERE TO GO.'

Once you are on *Trek*, you're part of the family. How ready are you for conventions, action figures, trading cards, etc.?
It's so much fun. Every moment of immersion has been just so exciting. It's founded on this great love of the story, and everything about *Star Trek*. To be able to represent in some way is an absolute thrill. I can't wait to see what comes of this. Whether or not it's an action figure... that would blow my mind. At that point, I'll know I've made it and I can retire.

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Dedicated Double

Avaah Blackwell is *Star Trek*'s current Tracee Lee Cocco. A generation ago, Cocco acted, served as a background player, and performed stunts in *The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, Voyager*, and three *TNG* feature films, sometimes looking like herself, but often buried deep beneath exotic alien makeups. Blackwell does likewise on *Discovery* and *Strange New Worlds*. On the former, she's portrayed several Osnullus characters, Lieutenant Ina, a Kelpien Council Member, a Linnarean Guard, and more, as well as lent her arm to the Gorn. On the latter, she's Rebecca Romijn's stunt double. Blackwell recently sat down with *Star Trek Explorer* to discuss the early days of her career, creating unique iterations of the Osnullus characters, attending conventions, and her hopes for the future. Here's what she had to say...

WORDS: IAN SPELLING

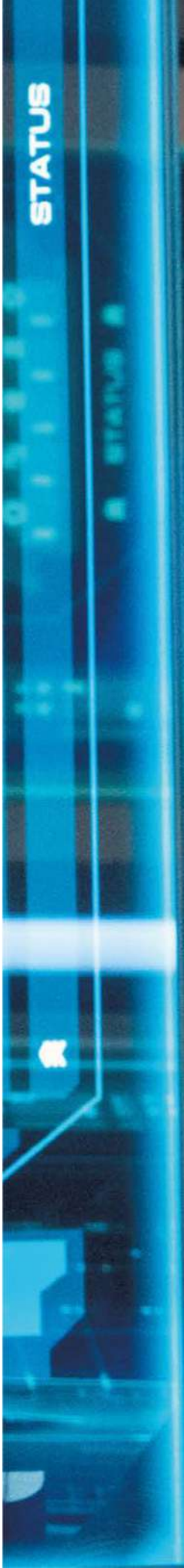
How did you get into performing?
I'm from a military family. Wherever we ended up, my parents made sure to put me in a karate dojo and into drama camp. It was my way of connecting with people in new communities. Also, I was really interested in both things. I flourished, and they were willing to support that, which was nice.

Did you want to act? Do stunts? Did you always want to do both?
I was always a very physical performer. I didn't know about stunts when I first got into the industry. I always wanted to be an actor. Later, as I found out more about stunts, I thought, "Well, that's interesting. I like the training process, so let's do that, too."

How familiar were you with *Trek* before it came along?
I grew up watching TNG and *Enterprise* with my mom. She did prosthetics as a hobby with our local church group, and was always trying out looks on me. You can see that that's translated into my career a bit. She's the Trekkie in our family, so she's ecstatic I'm on the shows.

How did you connect with *Discovery*?
It was a last-minute thing. An agent friend called and said, "Hey, can you get down to the studio right now?" I dropped everything and ran down there. They held up a costume in the fitting room and said to several of us, "Whoever fits this costume best goes to prosthetics." All the girls were skinnier. They were runway models – and younger. I was like, "I don't have a hope in heck," but then I put it on, and the costume fit like a glove. I went to prosthetics, they popped Osnullus on my head, and did the camera test.

So far, you're at seven on-camera roles. How much fun have you had playing them? And how do you differentiate the Osnullus characters, even just for yourself?



01

> "AS A STUNT DOUBLE, IT'S ALWAYS HUMBLING AND WONDERFUL WHEN YOUR ACTOR LOOKS TO YOU FOR DIRECTION."

01 Avaah Blackwell and Showrunner Alex Kurtzman discussing Osnullus mannerisms on the set of *Star Trek: Discovery*

02 Blackwell as Lt. Ina alongside Tilly in *Star Trek: Discovery*

03 Avaah Blackwell as a Linnarean Guard in the *Strange New Worlds* episode " Lift Us Where Suffering Cannot Reach"

02

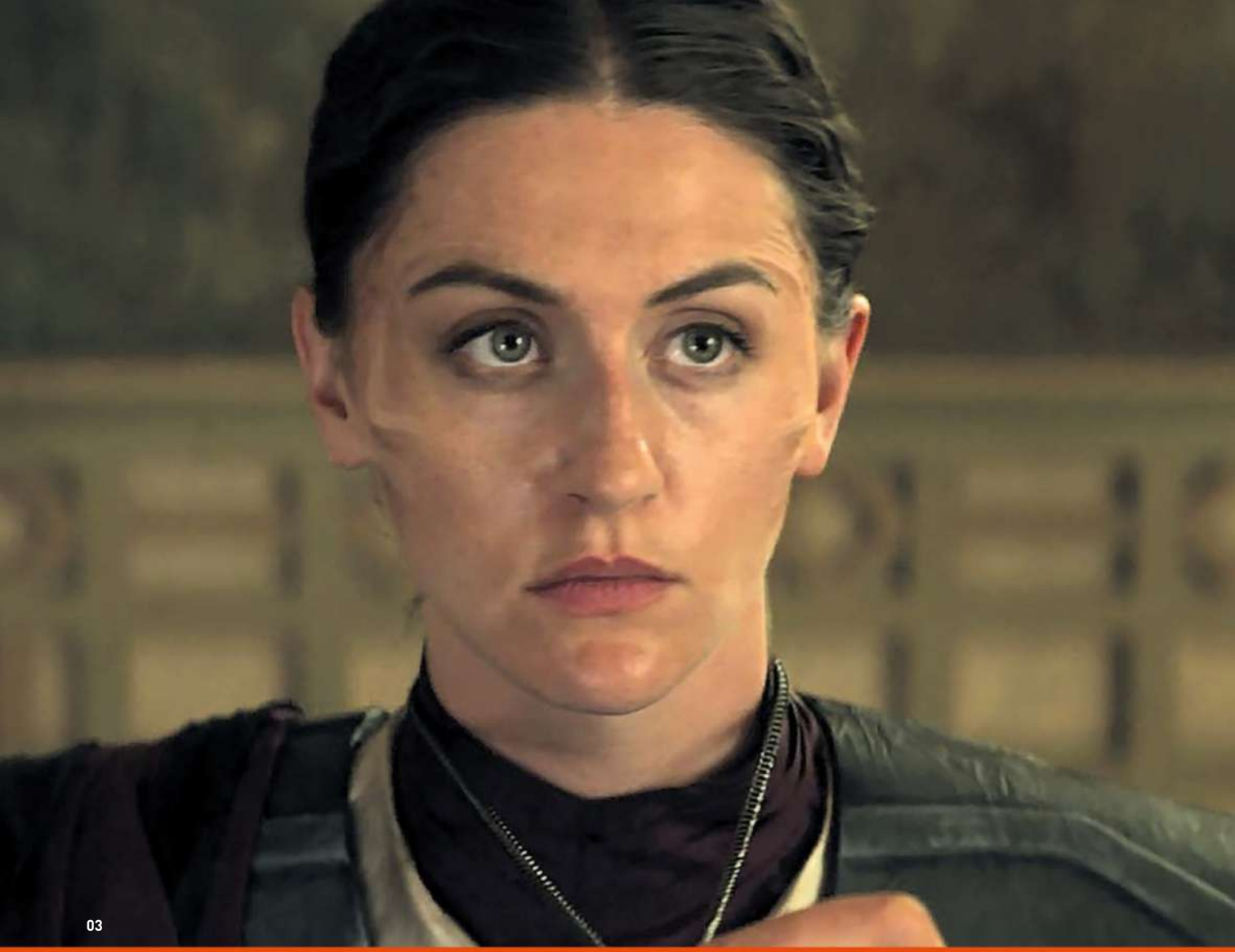
Olatunde (Osunsanmi) and the writers can address the storyline of the Osnullus species when they're ready, but as an actor, you make up your own backstory for each character. These are all the same species, so I've given them certain mannerisms of my own. Each character is different. I look at the dialogue, setting, character rank/status, and that informs the way their heads and bodies move, the postures. I made something up.

The reason you had to fit the costume was because you were not the original Osnullus…

I was replacing an actress. They had trouble finding somebody who wanted to do it, because it's a very difficult prosthetic. They went through three or four people before landing on me. I was only supposed to replace her for one day, and then they kept asking if I was available. I kept saying yes.

Do you act with or through the prosthetic?

Both. One reason I love prosthetics so much is because it's a collaborative performance. Television is always collaborative, but with prosthetics, you're working with prosthetic artists, designers, and the team. You work with them to bring this character to life. The way the prosthetic looks informs a lot about how we feel about that character, how it presents. The way it moves on camera, you have to work with it rather than against it.



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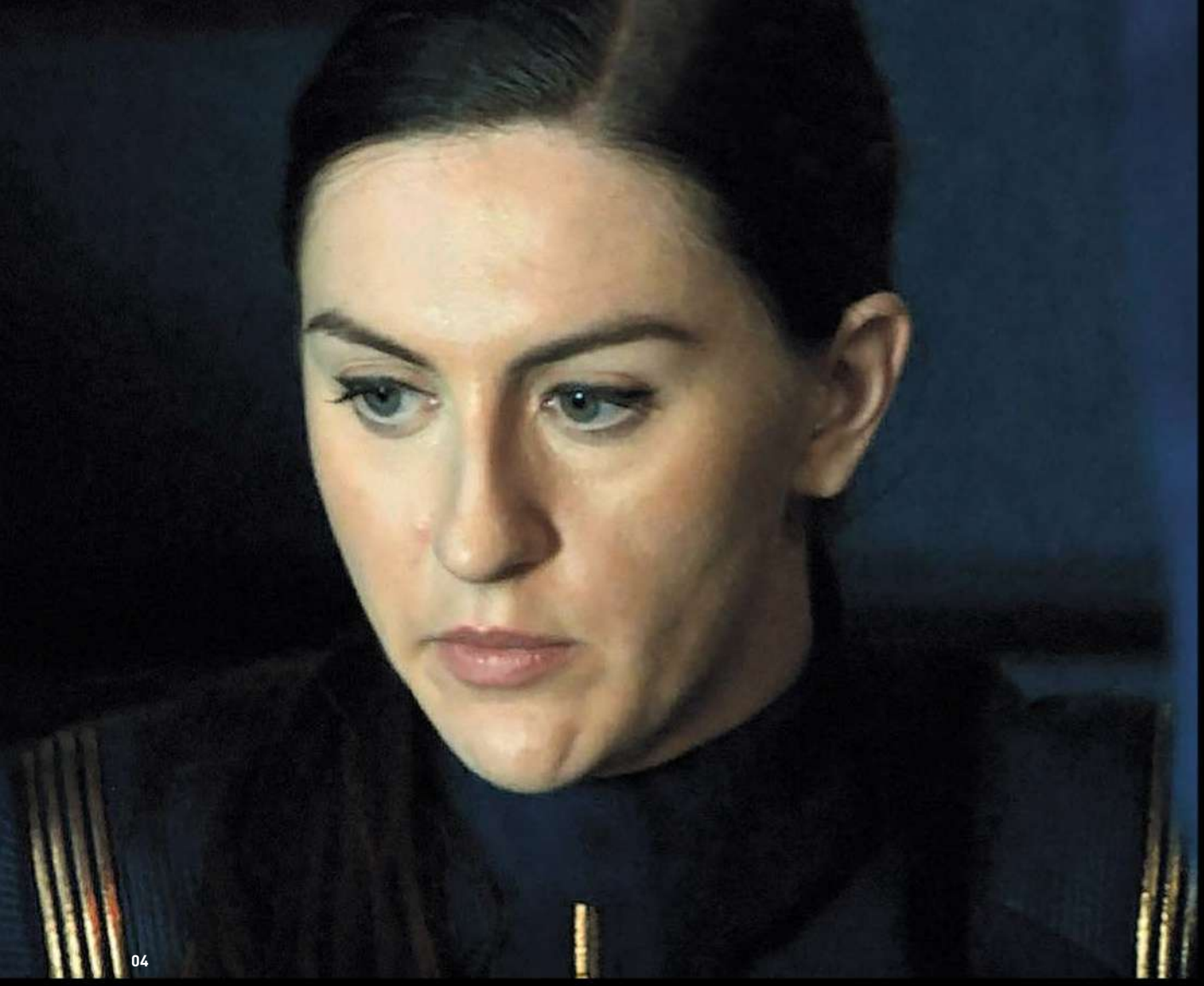
Who at *Discovery* said, "We like you. You're going to be our swing player"?
Originally, it was Heather Constable and Gersha Phillips. Gersha was the original costume designer for *Discovery* and Heather was my coordinator in the category I was in. Heather and I are both Alberta girls. She's from Edmonton, and I'm from Calgary. They liked working with me. They kept asking if I was available for other uncredited work. There's a whole plethora of background aliens I've played that have never been talked about. Someday we'll release all those. There are probably 20 other scenes I'm in as different aliens, especially throughout season two.

My first speaking role was Captain Rahma. That was Patrick Tidy, as far as I'm aware. They were doing the table read, and the Osnullus captain came up. Patrick was one of our first ADs and one of my favorite people ever. He looked up after the table read and said, "We should just have Avaah do it." Everybody agreed, and that was my first speaking role. It went from there.

You mentioned "popping" the Osnullus mask on and off. How heavy and claustrophobic is it?
I have less than 10 percent vision. I see out of the two little nose holes in Osnullus; that's it. Hugo Villasenor, one of the original prosthetics guys, weighed it, and it was 15 pounds. It sits straight down on the neck. It's a heavy prosthetic. To get the mask to play, I have to bend my head forward so that the eyes have the correct eye line. I'm looking at the ground most of the time playing Osnullus. I do everything by what little I can hear through the mask. It pops on and off. We rehearse without the mask on. When we're doing finals, the prosthetics team and costumes come in, take my jacket off, put on the head and gloves, and then we go. It depends on the day, but it takes at least three people, minimum, to get me ready to shoot.

We're assuming Lt. Ina is your favorite role so far...
It was super-cool to be Lt. Ina. That was the nicest gift I've gotten so far from *Trek*. It's all been great, but finally becoming a real girl, as I say, and getting to play on the bridge as a human was pretty cool.

Season five of *Discovery* is top-secret, but how likely is it that you'll add more characters to your *Star Trek* repertoire?



04

"EACH CHARACTER IS DIFFERENT. I LOOK AT THE DIALOGUE, SETTING, CHARACTER RANK/STATUS, AND THAT INFORMS THE WAY THEIR HEADS AND BODIES MOVE, THE POSTURES..."

Well, if history likes to repeat itself, I'd say so. I'm Rebecca Romijn's stunt double on *Strange New Worlds*, so there will be more of that. *Discovery*, I'm still involved as much as I can be. There have been some exciting developments with Osnullus, so I'm looking forward to people seeing that. It was nice that Sonequa (Martin-Green) backed that. It was (director) Andi Armaganian, Michelle Paradise, and Sonequa who made that happen.

What's it been like doubling Rebecca Romijn for stunts on *Strange New Worlds*?

It has been a dream come true. We have a lot of similarities. We're both tall. We both speak Dutch. We are both lefthanded. Her character's name is Una, mine is Ina. She's so fun to watch, such a pro. As a stunt double, it's always humbling and wonderful when your actor looks to you for direction. She has done that with me, which is great. On set, sometimes she'll turn to me and go, "Avaah, are we leading parallel lives?" I'm like, "I sure hope so, Rebecca. I sure hope so!" In the first season, I did five or six episodes. Stay tuned for season two.

You're in every group photo from *Discovery*. It seems like a very inclusive set...

I've been lucky to be on many sets around the world over my 10-year career, and *Discovery* is by far the best. That's in many ways thanks to Sonequa. She sets the tone. Doug Jones is a huge part of that, too. Doug is incredible. I've learned so much from watching him. I wouldn't be sitting here at this convention if it weren't for Doug; he introduced me to my convention agent. Sonequa makes a point of shaking everybody's hands and fist-bumping us every morning. We do 16 claps to get everybody synced up in energy.

05

06

04 Blackwell as Lt. Ina in *Star Trek: Discovery*

05 The cast of *Discovery* on set with guest star Kenneth Mitchell during recording of the season three finale

06 Blackwell on the Bridge, as Osnullus

07 Weighty Osnullus makeup!

07

Speaking of conventions, how have you enjoyed meeting fans, signing autographs, and posing for photos?
It's so cool hearing everybody's stories, and the stuff I get to sign is incredible. Seeing the dedication of people to *Trek* and how much it means to everyone... It's been huge for my life, and that's a small drop in the ocean of what *Trek* has done for the world. I signed a *Star Trek Encyclopedia* that a lovely fan named Donna has been going around and getting signed since 1994. I signed a sketch from a Navy Seal who sketched the *Discovery* as something to calm him down when he was out in the field. You can't explain it, but you just feel it when people bring that kind of thing up to you. It's incredible.

What else are you working on?
We just wrapped on *Locke and Key*. Now, I'm working on expanding out to the United States. I've had a pretty jam-packed schedule on a few new shows in Toronto. It's nice to see Toronto getting a lot more business, but I'm working on getting to the States more and meeting more people. Hopefully, I can make *Star Trek* my home and do some more acting out here soon, too.

THE Q CONTINUUM

Star Trek Explorer warped back into the Q Continuum to ask *Star Trek* actors, behind-the-scenes talent, authors, and more our latest and greatest question. That question: If you could slip into makeup and character as any *Star Trek* alien – or a different alien from the one(s) you play or have played – what alien would you play and why? So many people answered the question, we've broken this feature into two parts. A-I ran in *Star Trek Explorer #4* and we present J-Z here...

WORDS: IAN SPELLING

Which Alien Would You Play?

PART 2

01

DOUG JONES

Saru, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"Oh, I would love to be a Vulcan. I think they are so lithe and elegant and mysterious and stoic, and I seem to like that. I like anything that's postured, anything that holds a proud posture. So, I connected with Spock when I was a kid. He was the one who didn't look like everybody else on the bridge. He was tall and thin. I was like, 'Oh, I get him. Whoever he is, I get him.' I came to find out he's beloved by everybody, but he was special to me, dammit."

BARRY KELLY

Director, *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

"Morn. All he does is sit at a bar. So, you'd see me once in a while, I'd start to say something and then I'd never get around to saying it. Nobody would need to hear what I want to say because they'd just cut me off every time. Or they cut to Morn right after he's said something, and everyone around him is laughing. Morn's really got it going on. He's got a really good life on Deep Space 9. So, definitely Morn."

SEAN KENNEY

Captain Christopher Pike, *Star Trek*

"I'd like to play a Talosian. I like the idea of playing a telepathic character, and they didn't have emotion. That episode, 'The Menagerie', was way ahead of its time. That's why NBC couldn't even get behind it. They said, 'Nobody in the South is going to go for this. Nobody in the rural America is going to go for this.' They were totally wrong, because when people actually saw 'The Menagerie', so many people loved it. But that's the alien I'd like to play, a Talosian."

WALTER KOENIG

Chekov, *Star Trek*

"I would be anxious in any kind of mask or costume that required that I be sitting in the makeup chair for two hours. So, that would eliminate most of the aliens that played on our show. I don't know how those actors did it. I was just fine playing Chekov."

SHAZAD LATIF

Ash Tyler, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"Hopefully, a Vulcan. Maybe a Vulcan who just loses it. I mean, trying to do battle with that internal emotion stuff, that would be nice. Or maybe a Romulan, just because of the similarities with Vulcans. They're like violent Vulcans. It's subtle. It's subtle, but, yeah, they're violent Vulcans. There's something dark about them. I think that would be interesting to play."

DEBORAH LEVIN

Ensign Lang, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"It goes back to the human element. I am not sure what kind of alien I would want to play, but I would love to play one with emotions and feelings... one who would want to interact with and try to understand the humans, and maybe other aliens as well."

02

01 Previous page: Doug Jones as Saru

02 Sonequa Martin-Green as Michael Burnham

03 Kenneth Mitchell as the Klingon, Kol

DAVID MACK
***Star Trek* author**

"I'd play Morn's younger brother, so I wouldn't have to memorize any lines of dialogue."

SONEQUA MARTIN-GREEN
Michael Burnham, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I think an Orion would be funny. I really think that would be fun. I feel like it could lend itself to some pretty wild stuff."

UNA MCCORMACK
***Star Trek* author**

"If we're talking 'being' rather than 'playing', then I'd say a Trill symbiont, because you get to live so long and have so many interesting experiences."

ROBERT DUNCAN MCNEILL
Tom Paris, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"I liked the Vidiians. They were the ones that had the body parts, right? I thought they were very interesting because they were a very ominous and scary and yet somehow sympathetic species. There was a lot going on, I think, with them."

NAMI MELUMAD
Composer, Star Trek: Strange New Worlds

"I might want to be Zero, from *Prodigy*. They're a Medusan. They are mind readers, and that is incredible. They're telepathic. They can sense things. It's similar to Deanna Troi, really. So, maybe I'd want to be a Betazoid. I don't know, but I'm very intrigued by how, *Prodigy*, Zero is able to do that. To be a Medusan, it's such a different form of existence than what we know. We don't know their form, and that makes me so curious. So, that would probably be my pick."

MARK METCALF
Hirogen Medic, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"A Klingon would be interesting and fun. Many days, I'd just like to be a killing machine and go to war and have war all the time. But also the whole logical thing with Spock and the Vulcans appeals to me. That kind of character is probably closer to who I am.

JOHN JACKSON MILLER
***Star Trek* author and comic writer**

"I was born the night that 'A Piece of the Action' debuted on TV, so I'd be appropriately happy to be an Iotian alongside Bela Okmyx and Jojo Krako. No time in the makeup chair, and the suits are nice!"

KENNETH MITCHELL
Guest Star, roles including Aurellio, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"Odo. I love the idea of a Changeling, being able to play different characters, or versions of the same character. It'd be like what you saw on Rura Pentha. I also think it would be fun to play Mirror Kol or maybe some other Klingon character that's discovered with the Black Fleet in Sto-vo-kor."

SARA MITICH
Lieutenant Commander Airiam, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I love the look of the Andorians. There was actually a girl walking around at the *Star Trek* Las Vegas convention dressed up as one, and I just thought it was fascinating. And blue is my favorite color, so..."

03

ANTHONY MONTGOMERY

Ensign Travis Mayweather, *Star Trek: Enterprise*

"I think it would be fun to play a Vulcan. I've never been able to play a character full of emotions who had to repress those emotions. And on the opposite end of the spectrum, I think it would be fun to play a Klingon."

RONALD D. MOORE

Writer and Producer

"I think I'd want to play a Vulcan because, especially when I was a kid, I really tried to hear Leonard Nimoy's speech patterns in my head and watch his mannerisms and how he did things as an actor to create that character. I think, if I played a Vulcan, it would be fun to try to do to that, to try to replicate what Nimoy did, or at least how he did it."

MARIO MOREIRA

***Star Trek* Property Master**

"I think I'd like to be a Romulan. I like the Vulcan-like side of them, but the all-emotion part as well."

TIG NOTARO

Jett Reno, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I still don't know if I'm familiar enough with *Star Trek* yet with that to have a good answer for you, but let's go with a Vulcan. I think Vulcan is always a safe bet."

JERRY O'CONNELL

Jack Ransom, *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

"A Pakled. Actually, for *Lower Decks*, they had me voice a few Pakleds that were in the background of a scene from the show. I'm talking about season two. I have to say, I think I did a pretty good job of voicing Pakleds. I gave them some nuanced stuff that I was really proud of. So, I'd love to also play the live-action version of a Pakled, too."

OYIN OLADEJO

Joann Owosekun, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I love Saru, so I'd have to say a Kelpien. They seem like such interesting characters."

ROBERT O'REILLY

Chancellor Gowron, *Next Generation, Deep Space Nine*

"This isn't officially a *Star Trek* alien, but I'd like to play a large, six-foot-tall ice cream cone. Chocolate, of course, with red sprinkles and maybe a few green sprinkles on the very top. And here's my reason… Everybody loves ice cream, which is not so true with Gowron. And, poor Gowron, he was just misunderstood."

MICHELLE PARADISE

Writer and producer, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I actually want to play an engineer, so I could rattle off a bunch of science stuff and then sound really, really smart. But if I played an alien, it would have to be an alien without full prosthetics, because I would get claustrophobic. How Doug Jones does what he does is miraculous, under all of that prosthetic. I would have to be

04

Trill or Vulcan, where most of me is not covered and I still feel like I can breathe. I'd have to do it that way."

ETHAN PECK

Spock, *Star Trek: Discovery, Strange New Worlds*

"Data's an android, not an alien, but he'd be my choice. I think Data presents a lot of the same challenges that Spock does for an actor, and it's just a really interesting world to be inside of and explore."

ETHAN PHILLIPS

Neelix, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"The Trabe because… well, come on, they're the Trabe!"

ROBERT PICARDO

The Doctor, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"He's not an alien, but I'd go with Harry Mudd, just to have all those scantily clad women hanging all over him. That was such a fun character. But an alien? I'm too claustrophobic to wear major latex makeup anymore, so I would probably have to say aliens with very small facial appliances. I would love to play Kurtwood Smith's character in that great guest star role he did for us in 'Year of Hell'. But that's not a fair answer. I'm going to say a Bolian, because all I would have to do is be blue."

ALLISON PILL

Doctor Agnes Jurati, *Star Trek: Picard*

"Everybody has so many prosthetics and I hate prosthetics! So, maybe a Borg after they've gotten all the junk off. Or… probably a Vulcan. I'd be interested in playing a Vulcan, and it's just the ears and eyebrows."

JOHN PUTCH

***Star Trek* Guest Star**

"Wow, dude. Man. Oh, I know. I'd want to play the Gorn. I'd still be in a rubber suit. You won't have to see me. You know what I'm saying?"

ANTHONY RAPP

Paul Stamets, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I like the Tellarites. I'm still curious about them, and I like the way they've done the makeup on *Discovery*. The Tellarites haven't had enough screen time yet, but just to see how expressive they are, it would be fun to play with that and to find a character inside of that thing."

MARTIN RAYNER

Doctor Chaotica, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"Can it be Spock's brother or some other relation to Spock? I'd love to try that, playing a Vulcan. I'd love to have a go at the Spock-like character."

ANDY ROBINSON

Garak, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*

"I was so happy with Garak, but if you're forcing me to pick one… I think a Vulcan. I always found them very interesting. I'm not sure, as an actor, I'd want to play one as a series regular, but a guest spot would be interesting; do it once."

04 Jeri Ryan, as seen in *Star Trek: Picard*

05 William Shatner as Captain Kirk

05

TIM RUSS

Commander Tuvok, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"I know they're not aliens, but possibly one of the second-in-command characters, like Riker or Chakotay, etc... But I actually prefer having played Tuvok the most."

JERI RYAN

Seven of Nine, *Star Trek: Voyager*

"Any other alien? Well, I got to play a Ferengi and I got to play a Klingon with lots of prosthetics, so I already did that in one of the episodes. I'm going to stick with the Borg. They were fun. The Ferengi was fun to play, but I think I had the coolest alien to play."

WILLIAM SHATNER

Captain Kirk, *Star Trek*

"I would've loved to have been this handsome, athletic God with omniscient powers. That would have been fun. Is that an alien? I don't know. But that's what comes to mind."

ARMIN SHIMERMAN

Quark, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*

"I would play Garak. His mind was so delicious. People almost always think of Quark as a comic character, despite the many times I was part of very serious situations and emotional dilemmas. But Garak, who was as conniving as Quark, is considered a dramatic character. I would love to be able to prove that Armin is not essentially a comic actor, but a multi-faceted chameleon who could be both wily and still beloved. Plus, Garak's secrets are just so wonderfully delicious that it would be a banquet for me to savor some of his convoluted mind games. To embody the other side of a *Star Trek* tactician without having the responsibility of being comic relief would be an artistic challenge and consummation devoutly to be wished."

MARINA SIRTIS

Counsellor Troi, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

"Nothing! I never want to put prosthetic makeup on again! [laughs] As long as I live. Nope. There's not a single alien I want to be. Maybe an invisible alien. I'd just do the voice. I'd consider that."

KITTY SWINK

Quark's wife, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, and other roles

"I'd go with the Borg Queen. Who doesn't like to play bad? And she was very, very bad. If I did it, I'd only ever want to do it once. I know what Armin went through every day to play Quark, and it was hard, physically and on his skin. It's probably the same with the Borg Queen. But I would try it once."

06

GEORGE TAKEI

Sulu, *Star Trek*

"I would love to play an alien on a *Star Trek* show, still. To play an alien, to have a totally different mentality, history, personality… warm or evil, that would be interesting to me. Just like when I played the evil, crazed, individualist Sulu (in "Mirror, Mirror"). I am an actor and I like the challenge of playing a character that is totally different. I would love to play a really imaginative, original, shocking alien."

HARRY TREADAWAY

Narek, *Star Trek: Picard*

"I don't know, but something with less makeup than a Romulan. I really don't know what that would be. Maybe a human! But that's not an alien. Well, it'd be an alien to someone who's not human."

SAM VARTHOLOMEOS

Ensign Danby Connor, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I would say a Kelpien, but I'm not tall enough. Doug Jones has brought a brand-new species to life, and I'd love to play one, I'd have to be like 6'3" for that. They do have those huge shoes that Doug wears, but I still don't think I'd be anywhere near tall enough."

NANA VISITOR

Kira Nerys, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*

"I wouldn't mind playing an orb. An orb sounds like a pretty good thing. I really got it all with Kira, great character and not hours and hours in the makeup chair. The only other thing I would've liked is to have played the Intendant some more. I could easily stay in the Intendant role and be happy. Actually, I'd love to play the computer voice for a space station. I think I'd have to give her just a little bit of attitude, though."

BEVERLY WASHBURN

Lt. Arlene Galway, *Star Trek*

"Since I played Lt. Arlene Galway on 'The Deadly Years', and it was such a fun role, I would actually like to play her again. Maybe through the magic of television I would miraculously come back to life. Better yet, I wouldn't die at all! However, if I were to play an alien, I think it would be fun to be a Metron, one of the reasons being that they have such a long lifespan."

06

MICHAEL WELCH

Artim in *Star Trek: Insurrection*

"I know I should say something other than what I played, but why would I pick anything but a Ba'ku? They literally live in paradise. It's just the perfect lifestyle. I could sit around and play Hacky-Sack all day. That sounds awesome to me."

NOËL WELLS

Ensign D'Vana Tendi, *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

"I don't know if this is taboo to say, but Jean-Luc Picard. Everybody seems to be doing gender flips for things online, right? I guess Picard isn't an alien, but wait, wouldn't he be an alien to an alien? But if that's not an acceptable answer, then I'd say I'd want to play a Klingon. A Klingon sounds great."

ANNIE WERSCHING

Liana, *Star Trek: Enterprise*

"Oh, my goodness. Well, what's funny is the thing that's first in my head is Seven of Nine, but that's kind of what I already did as the Borq Queen. Hmm. I guess a Klingon would be fun. I have a good friend from college, Jen Usellis, who does full songs and translates and speaks Klingon. The Klingon Pop Warrior is her handle. So, I think I would go Klingon because I could go to Jen and learn a lot and get advice from her.

MICHAEL WESTMORE

Makeup Artist, *Star Trek*

"Wow. I've got to figure out whether I want to get into makeup or not. I know what it's like to have that stuff glued on and I don't like it. The Borg... you don't get to move around a lot. On *Voyager*, there was an interesting species that I still think about, the people that were made up of different pieces of skin. The Vidiians. That was fascinating, doing them because you had to make their hands and their face, and, really, any exposed skin into a patchwork. If I was going to taste my own medicine, I guess it'd be a Vidiian."

RAINN WILSON

Harry Mudd, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I think a Romulan. Romulans are like mean Vulcans. I think that there's more to be discovered about the Romulans, so it'd be really interesting to do a deep dive into the Romulans. Maybe it's Romulan history, when they split off, or what makes them tick, or just finding some new elements to what it means to be a Romulan."

MARY WISEMAN

Lieutenant Sylvia Tilly, *Star Trek: Discovery*

"I always wanted to play a Betazoid, because mind reading is really fun and I'm super into empathy. So, that would be a real blast. Or, aren't there Andorians that live in the center of their planet and they're sort of psychic? Maybe, I'd play one of them. So, I guess I want to be a psychic alien."

06 Rainn Wilson as Harry Mudd in *Strange New Worlds*

07 Harry Treadaway) as the Romulan Tal Shiar agent, Narek, in the first season of *Star Trek: Picard*

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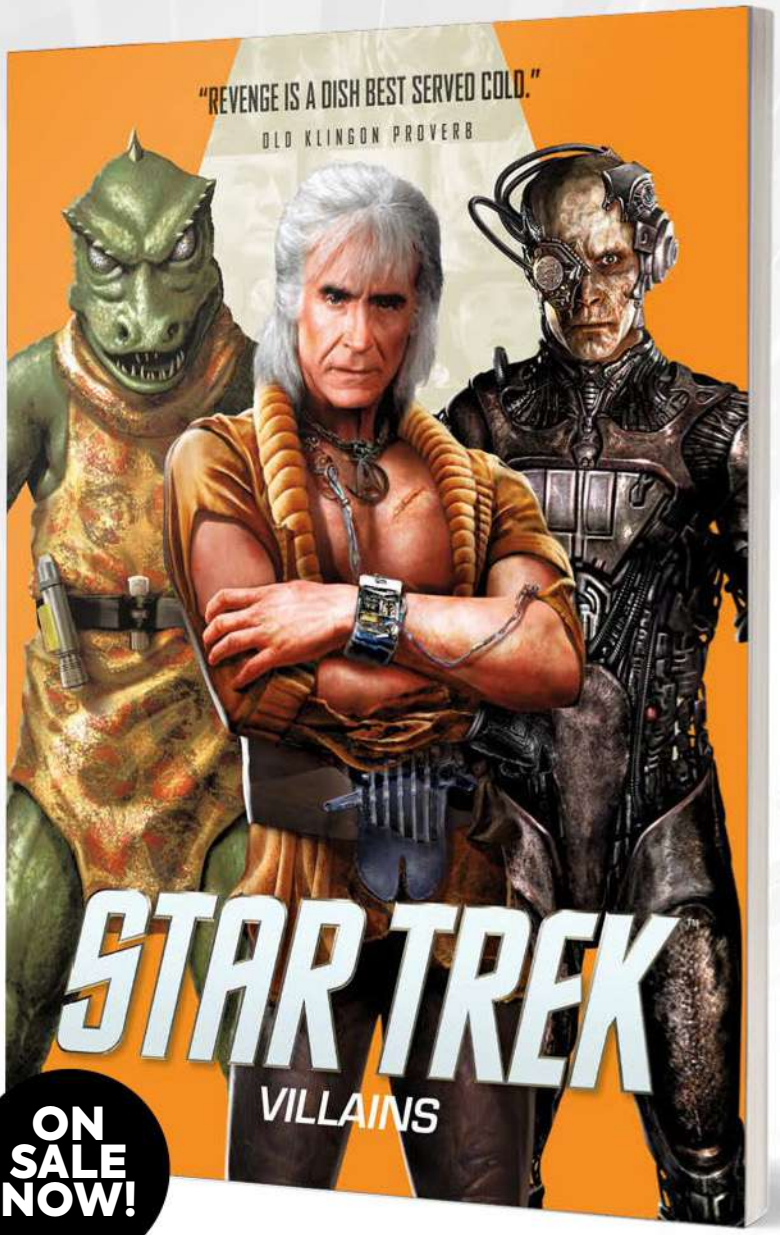

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The best Uhura moments revealed.
QUIZ
An Uhura spot the difference challenge.
PAYING TRIBUTE
Trek alumni remember Nichelle Nichols.
NYOTA UHURA
SUPPLEMENTAL
BY SPECIAL REQUEST
Julian Bashir and Miles O'Brien star in an all-new tale.

TOP 10 UHURA MOMENTS

BY JAY STOBIE

10 Taking Flight

(STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER)

As Captain Kirk commanded a mission to save the Federation, Klingon, and Romulan ambassadors from Nimbus III, Nyota Uhura valiantly piloted the shuttlecraft that was to swoop in and gather up the *Enterprise* team and the hostages. Kirk's assault on the compound proved futile, yet Uhura exhibited coolness under pressure as she engaged in the combat flight.

09 Romulans and Reliability

***(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES* "BALANCE OF TERROR")**

During the *U.S.S. Enterprise*'s pursuit of the Romulan vessel which had attacked several Federation outposts, Lieutenant Stiles needed to leave his position as ship's navigator to assist the phaser team. At Captain Kirk's request, Uhura immediately stepped in and took over the navigation station, showcasing the depth of her professional talent and her ability to tackle emergency situations with confidence and reliability.

08 A Dutiful Officer

***(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES* "I, MUDD")**

Imprisoned by Harry Mudd, Lieutenant Uhura seemingly betrayed her colleagues when she revealed a ploy to escape that the other officers had hoped to employ. Believing Uhura did so to receive an automated body of her own, Mudd's androids had no idea that the communication's officer's performance was all part of a separate ruse to trick their captors. Uhura loyally adhered to her duties, earning praise from Captain Kirk in the process.

07 Finding Friends

***(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES* "THE GALILEO SEVEN")**

After the shuttle *Galileo* disappeared, the *U.S.S. Enterprise* needed to search a vast area with limited time and resources. With Spock on the shuttle, Lieutenant Uhura became acting science officer and pinpointed Taurus II, a planet with a breathable atmosphere. Uhura's detective work paid off, as Taurus II was indeed the world where the *Galileo* had crashed. This information ultimately led to the survivors' recovery.

06 A Confident Declaration

(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES "THE NAKED TIME")

Under the influence of a mind-altering contagion, Hikaru Sulu grabbed his fencing sword and terrorized the ship. Sulu was bravely approached by Nyota Uhura, who sought to diffuse the situation. The helmsman swiftly claimed that he would protect the "fair maiden." Without missing a beat, Uhura defiantly replied to the descriptor with the epic comeback, "Sorry, neither." The declaration underlined her status as a skilled Starfleet officer, not a 'damsel in distress.'

05 Bypassing Circuits

(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES "WHO MOURNS FOR ADONAIS?")

With the *U.S.S. Enterprise* trapped by the hand of the entity known as Apollo and unable to communicate with its landing party, Lieutenant Uhura demonstrated that her training extended far beyond sending and receiving hails. Uhura dove into the communications circuits to make repairs, successfully bypassing the damaged systems and managing to contact the planet below. Science Officer Spock even voiced his confidence in Uhura and her technical skills.

04 A Mirror Mission

(STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES "MIRROR, MIRROR")

Trapped in the Mirror Universe, Captain Kirk asked Lieutenant Uhura to head to the Terran *Enterprise*'s bridge and learn what she could from the ship's communications. Uhura set aside her concerns and boldly ventured out into the perilous and unfamiliar reality on her own. Not only did Uhura accomplish her mission, but the comm officer also heroically stood up to Hikaru Sulu's Mirror Universe counterpart and played a pivotal role in returning to the *U.S.S. Enterprise*.

03 Chang's Challenge

(STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY)

Unable to locate General Chang's cloaked ship, the *U.S.S. Enterprise*-A could not beam down a landing party and ensure that the Khitomer Conference went ahead without incident. Nyota Uhura devised an ingenious suggestion: deploy the equipment for cataloging gaseous anomalies to detect the Klingon ship's emissions. The plan succeeded and a new era of galactic peace was ushered in.

02 Invading the Enterprise

(STAR TREK IV: THE VOYAGE HOME)

Stuck in 1986 and needing to recrystallize dilithium, Nyota Uhura and Pavel Chekov infiltrated the aircraft carrier *Enterprise* to obtain high-energy photons that allowed Admiral Kirk's team the ability to power their stolen Klingon starship, retrieve two humpback whales, and return to the 23rd century to prevent Earth's devastation. You might say that, without Uhura, Earth's human population would have ceased to exist!

01 This is Fantasy

(STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK)

While it didn't involve preserving interstellar peace or saving Earth, Nyota Uhura's willingness to break Federation law to help bring Spock back to life was the pinnacle of character and friendship. Holding a young officer at phaser point, Uhura commandeered a transporter so that she could beam Kirk and company up, giving them the chance to steal the *U.S.S. Enterprise* and resurrect their dear friend.

TAKING FLIGHT

***(Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* "Children of the Comet")**

Prior to serving with Captain James T. Kirk, Cadet Nyota Uhura overcame self-doubt and harnessed her deep knowledge of languages and music to decipher a harmonic code embedded in an asteroid's artificial chamber. The combination of Uhura's two passions unlocked the secret to lowering the asteroid's shields and giving Captain Pike the opportunity to beam the landing party back to the *U.S.S. Enterprise*.

Star Trek Explorer Quiz

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Here's Lieutenant Uhura as seen in one of her earliest scenes, from the episode "The Corbomite Maneuver" – but the gold uniform she's wearing isn't the only difference between the two pictures below!

WORDS: JONATHAN WILKINS

Can you spot all 10 differences – and for a bonus point, in which other TOS episode does Uhura sport a gold uniform?

BEFORE

AFTER

Starfleet Ranking

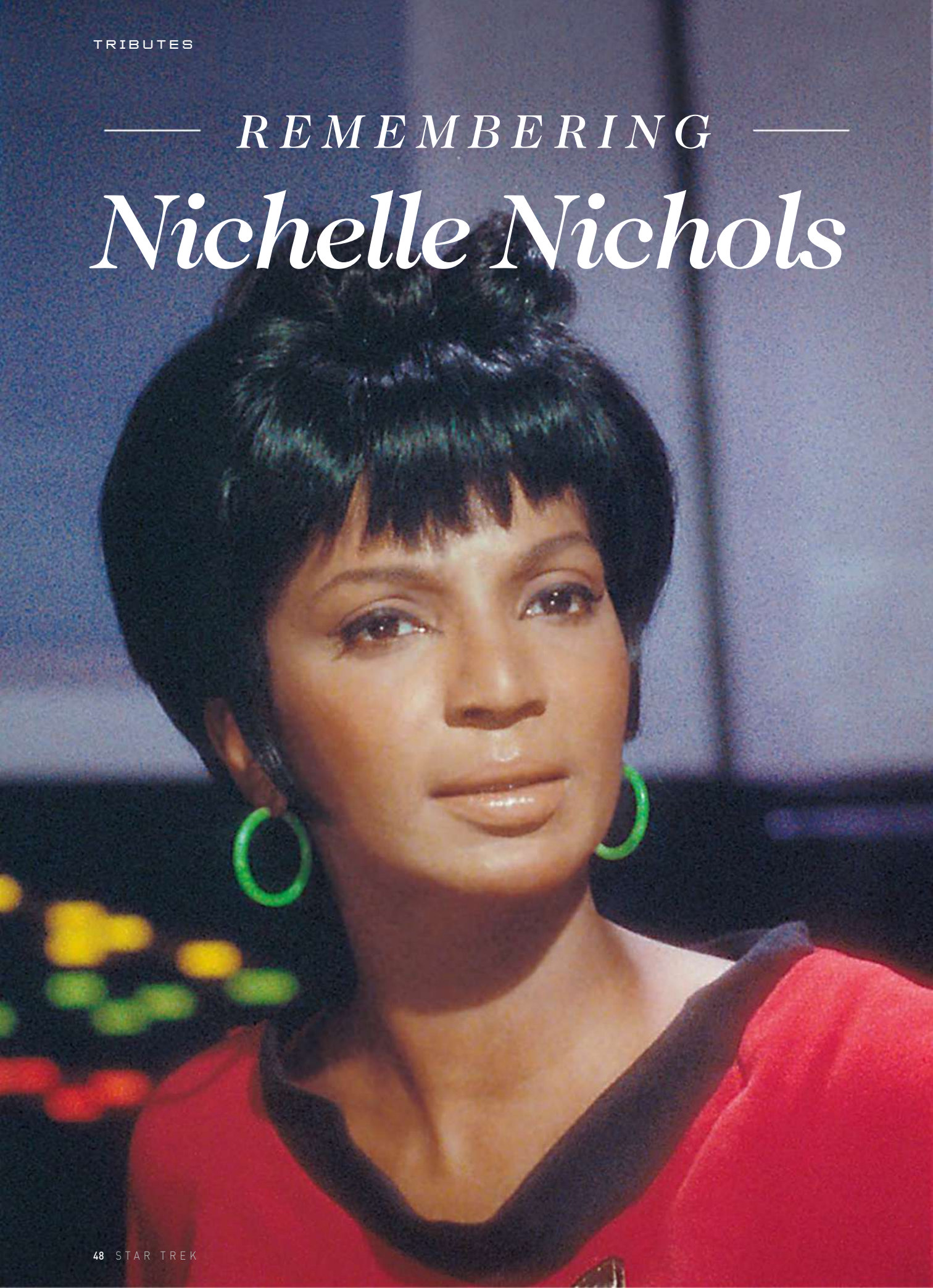
1 – 3 Your observation skills need honing, cadet!

4 – 6 Better, but definitely not Lieutenant rank!

7 – 10 You've communicated well – beam to the Bridge and take your station.

Bonus Point: Uhura also wore a gold uniform in "Mudd's Women".

REMEMBERING
Nichelle Nichols



Nichelle Nichols first opened hailing frequencies in 1966 and, thanks to her magnificent, classy, and memorable embodiment of Lt. Nyota Uhura, they'll remain open for eternity – despite her death on July 30, 2022, at the age of 89. In the days after Nichols' passing, countless people shared memories and paid tribute to her on social media and during public events. *Star Trek Explorer* has gathered together just a few of those memories, and tributes as part of this issue's looks back at Nichols' life, career, and legacy...

WORDS: IAN SPELLING

Zoe Saldana

Uhura, *Star Trek*

I'm saddened to learn of Nichelle Nichols' passing. We have lost a true star, a unique artist who was ahead of her time always. She's an icon, an activist and most importantly an amazing woman who blazed a trail that has shown so many how to see women of color in a different light. Her strive for equality was unwavering. Meeting Nichelle was truly a very special moment in my life. Her energy was infectious every time I was in her presence.

She convinced me in believing that anything was achievable, if you put your heart into it. I mean, she inspired Mae Jemison to follow her dreams of becoming an astronaut, and that's exactly what Mae did. I knew I had big shoes to fill when I was chosen to play Uhura, and Nichelle made me feel safe, told me to play her with all the confidence in the world.

My hope is that we continue to keep her memory alive by celebrating her amazing body of work, and by spreading the message of peace and equality amongst all people. She lived a long, impactful life and not only prospered, but helped so many others prosper too. Maya Angelou once said "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." I agree with this statement with the exception of Nichelle Nichols. It'll be hard to forget what she said and hard to forget what she did, and it will certainly be impossible to forget how she made us feel.

Rest in power, Queen Nichelle.

Celia Rose Gooding

Uhura, *Star Trek Strange New Worlds*

I didn't get a chance to meet her, which is something I'm making my peace with. But I am very much a spiritual person, and I know without the shadow of a doubt that we are so incredibly connected and I feel her presence everywhere. It's a gift. Anyone who had an opportunity to meet Nichelle knows how warm and loving she was. She gave so, so much of herself to this franchise. I am happy to be just a fraction of her legacy, because she was an incredible, incredible, incredible, incredible woman.

NASA

We celebrate the life of Nichelle Nichols, *Star Trek* actor, trailblazer, and role model, who symbolized to so many what was possible. She partnered with us to recruit some of the first women and minority astronauts, and inspired generations to reach for the stars.

William Shatner

Captain Kirk, *Star Trek*

I am so sorry to hear about the passing of Nichelle. She was a beautiful woman and played an admirable character that did so much for redefining social issues both here in the US and throughout the world.

I will certainly miss her.

Jason Alexander

Kurros, *Star Trek: Voyager*

My love for the original *Star Trek* is profound. Nichelle Nichols was a ground-breaker and a glorious ambassador for her show, her role and science all her life. And a truly lovely person. May she have a wonderful adventure to the final frontier.

Sonequa Martin-Green

Michael Burnham, *Star Trek: Discovery*

I knew this was going to be difficult to talk about her. She's very much 1,000 percent actually a hero. There's such a dearth of women in STEM careers and especially Black women, Latina women, Indigenous women. It's 10 percent in STEM careers today. So, we need more of us out there and that's why I jumped at the opportunity to (get involved with Million Girls Moonshot, an organization that aspires to get a million more girls into STEM learning opportunities and programs). It's all because of her, really. Because she's the one that helped integrate NASA way back then. She's the one that said, "Wait a second, I don't see what I need to be seeing. I don't see equality here." And she dedicated the rest of her life to it — from 1977 to 2015 — to establishing these programs in NASA. And now here we are, and these girls can have this experience. And I'm grateful to be a part of it. I know she said when she was still here, "If I've inspired you at all, I just ask that you continue this legacy. So, of course now all of us that have been inspired by her. And I hope these girls can do that too."

Kate Mulgrew

Captain Janeway, *Star Trek: Voyager*

Nichelle Nichols was The First. She was a trailblazer who navigated a very challenging trail with grit, grace, and a gorgeous fire we are not likely to see again. May she Rest In Peace.

J.J. Abrams

Director, *Star Trek*

A remarkable woman in a remarkable role. Nichelle, you will be deeply missed. Sending much love and respect.

Marina Sirtis

Deanna Troi, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

You led the way and opened the door for the rest of us who followed in your wake. We will be forever grateful. My heart is broken.

President Joe Biden

In Nichelle Nichols, our nation has lost a trailblazer of stage and screen who redefined what is possible for Black Americans and women. A daughter of a working-class family from Illinois, she first honed her craft as an actor and singer in Chicago, before touring the country and the world performing with the likes of Duke Ellington and giving life to the words of James Baldwin. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, she shattered stereotypes to become the first Black woman to act in a major role on a primetime television show with her groundbreaking portrayal of Lt. Uhura in the original *Star Trek*. With a defining dignity and authority, she helped tell a central story that reimagined scientific pursuits and discoveries. And she continued this legacy by going on to work with NASA to empower generations of Americans from every background to reach for the stars and beyond. Our nation is forever indebted to inspiring artists like Nichelle Nichols, who show us a future where unity, dignity, and respect are cornerstones of every society.

Dr. Mae Jemison

Engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut

Nichelle Nichols is forever for me the embodiment of grace, daring, intelligence, fun, inspiration, beauty, talent and the future. Today I am heart-sad at her passing. I consider our dearest friendship a great treasure & privilege in my life.

Alex Kurtzman

Writer, Producer, *Star Trek: Discovery, Star Trek: Picard* and *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*

Nichelle was a singular inspiration. She's the one who really opened my eyes to what *Star Trek* is and can be. I can't tell you how many people have told me she's the reason they became… an astronaut, a scientist, a writer, a linguist, an engineer… it goes on and on. We stand in her light and honor her today and every day. Thank you, dear Nichelle, for leading the way.

Olatunde Osunsanmi

Producer, *Star Trek: Discovery*

Nichelle Nichols, thank you for igniting the flame of a beautiful journey. For myself, and millions of others on our world. We'll miss you.

Adam Nimoy

Director, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

The importance of Nichelle's legacy cannot be overemphasized. She was much loved and will be missed.

Whoopi Goldberg

Guinan, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

Nichelle Nichols was a trailblazer, a heroine, and an extraordinary woman, somebody who inspired millions and millions of people. She inspired me. As I've explained, when I went to get my gig at *Star Trek*, Nichelle was the first Black person I'd ever seen who made it to the future. She was head of communications. This show and this woman was the one beacon that said, "Yes, we'll be there." And it just made me feel like that was an amazing thing, and she helped propel other women to go into space. She was extraordinary. I was lucky enough to spend time with her over the years. She was my friend and… she'll be missed. That's what I can say. She'll be missed.

Tim Russ

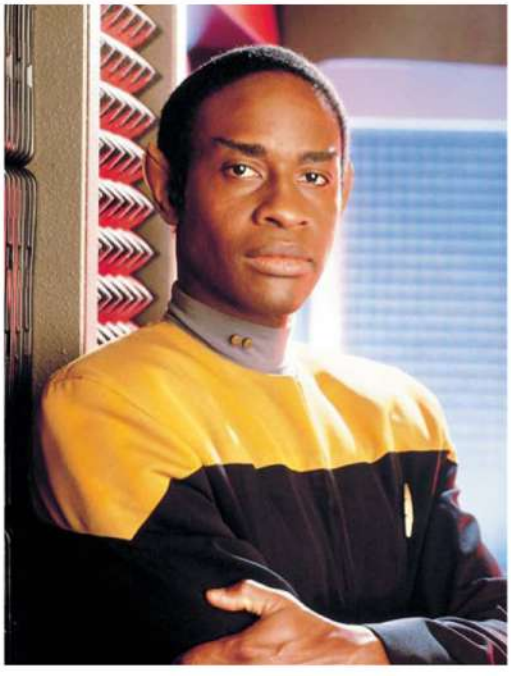
Commander Tuvok, *Star Trek: Voyager*

Nichelle's legacy is widely known, having broken the color barrier on *Star Trek* playing a bridge officer. Her being a role model for casting choices in future shows is now being felt in ways that weren't even considered not that long ago. I worked with Nichelle on several projects, and she was always very professional and gracious. She will be missed.

Hillary Clinton

US politician, diplomat, and former lawyer

"If you can see it, you can be it," the saying goes. Nichelle Nichols gave millions of people the opportunity to see themselves on the frontiers of science and exploration, boldly expanding human understanding. She inspired so many of us to reach for the stars. What a legacy.



George Takei

Hikaru Sulu, *Star Trek*

When my husband Brad and I got married, we asked Walter Koenig, who played Ensign Chekov on the show, to be our best man at the wedding. We asked Nichelle to be our matron of honor. In her characteristic fashion, Nichelle declared, "I am not a matron! If Walter can be best man, why can't I be best lady?" Noting that Walter's "best man" title implied the awkward title of "best woman," she was determined to be known as the "best lady" to the guests. I told her, "Of course you are."

When my father passed away, Nichelle came to the funeral, and she saw many Japanese Americans with envelopes. They were handing them over to a receptionist in the lobby. She was always a curious soul, so she asked me, "George, what are they bringing to the funeral?" I said it was friends and relatives making financial contributions to support the funeral costs. Nichelle had never heard of the Japanese tradition called koden. A few days later, an envelope arrived in the mail from her. Inside was a check for $500, a very generous koden.

So while fans will miss and honor the famous actress who opened so many paths with her presence on the screen, I will also miss the dear friend who always let you know she was there to support you, to love you, and to go through this strange and wonderful life alongside you. Nichelle Nichols, you were one in a million in so many, many ways.

Kim Cattrall

Valeris, *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*

You were a beautiful pioneer on Earth as you were in space.

Bernice King

Daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

Representation matters. Excellence in representation matters even more. Thank you, Nichelle Nichols. Rest well, ancestor.

Robert Picardo

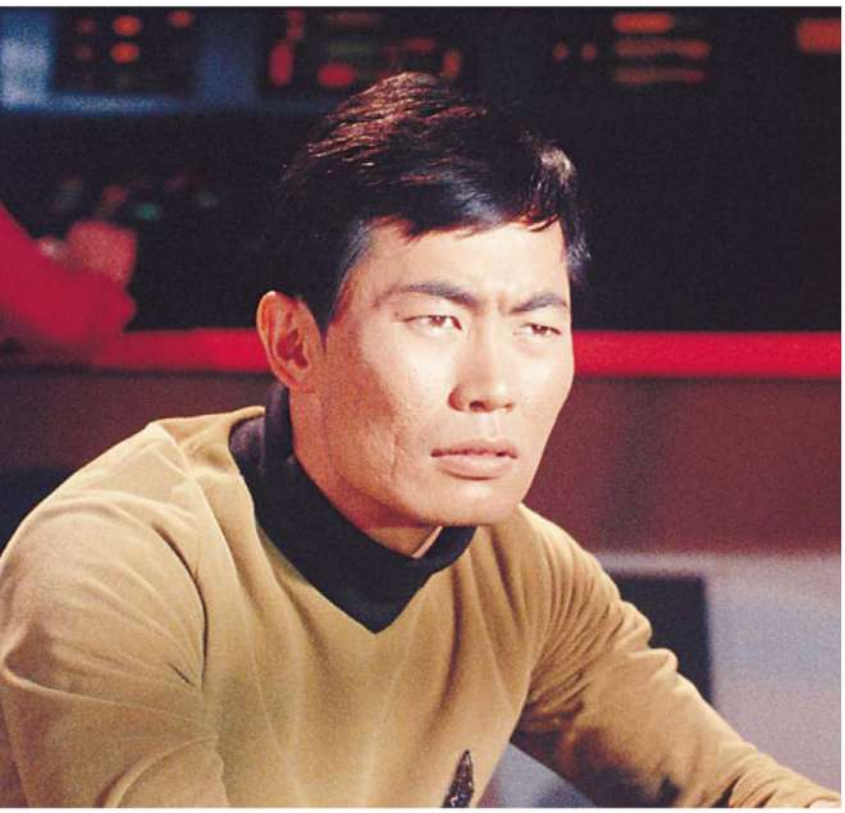
The Doctor, *Star Trek: Voyager*

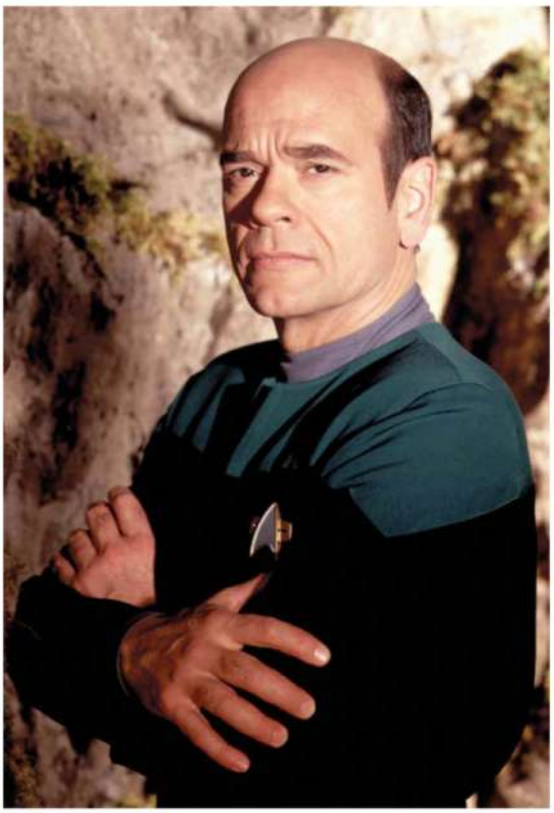
Nichelle was, of course, not only a wonderful actress, a gorgeous woman with a gorgeous singing voice who was beautiful until the very end of her life, and a beloved character on Star Trek, she was really the first person that I was aware of from *Star Trek* that was very active in soliciting people of color, particularly women of color, to apply to be astronauts. She worked with NASA to make that happen. We all know the story about Dr. Martin Luther King telling her why she couldn't leave the show. It's because she was so inspirational to people, especially young women of color. She really embodied to me that inspirational connection between *Star Trek* and NASA and space exploration. So, I always looked at her as not only an influencer to so many other people, but to me as well. It's partly because of her that I am so involved with The Planetary Society. And now I'm trying to inspire people to join The Planetary Society and become excited about space exploration. So, we carry it forward.

Dawnn Lewis

Carol Freeman, *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

I've been very blessed and very grateful for not just a long career, but a varied career that is still constantly moving forward. I am grateful that people follow me, whether from television to movies to the Broadway stage to the music I compose or that I get to record, but I have to tell you, 56 years ago, when *Star Trek* first hit the airwaves, I got to see Nichelle Nichols on camera.





▶ As a little brown girl in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, her being there in the future, being excellent, being gorgeous, being badass, handling herself... it was just such an inspiration to me because, at the same time that was happening on television, in the world, people of color were being brutalized, were not allowed to sit certain places, and were being attacked by dogs and by hoses. So, that reality that Mr. Roddenberry so brilliantly and heartfelt-edly created, it created possibilities for me and it made me proud to be who I was and to always do my best to be my best. So, translate all that to now, and to listen (to fans) recall my journey, means now I'm the one that people are watching. That gives me an opportunity to continue to be my best, and I hopefully I encourage some other young, Black, Brown, Latino child, whether boy or girl, to see themselves, and to be their best selves, and to believe that there is excellence for them and opportunity as well.

Bill Nye

The Science Guy and CEO of The Planetary Society

Nichelle Nichols told me this story: After a season on *Star Trek*, she planned to leave the sci-fi show to act on Broadway. After all, she was a striking, accomplished actress. But, Dr. MLK Jr. told her to stay. She changed the world. Thank you, Nichelle.

Kyle Johnson

Nichelle Nichols' son

A great light in the firmament no longer shines for us as it has for so many years. My mother, Nichelle Nichols, succumbed to natural causes and passed away. Her light, however, like the ancient galaxies now being seen for the first time, will remain for us and future generations to enjoy, learn from, and draw inspiration. Hers was a life well-lived and, as such, a model for us all.

LeVar Burton

Geordi LaForge, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

Heartbroken at the news of her passing, however, I am comforted in the knowledge that she illuminated the way for so of us many with her grace, beauty, talent, intelligence and her commitment to humanity going boldly to the stars!

Wilson Cruz

Dr. Hugh Culber, *Star Trek: Discovery*

Before we understood how much Representation Matters, Nichelle Nichols modeled it for us. With her very presence and her grace she shone a light on who we as people of color are and inspired us to reach for our potential. Rest well, glittering diamond in the sky.

Bill Nelson

NASA Administrator

Nichelle's advocacy transcended television and transformed NASA. After *Apollo 11,* Nichelle made it her mission to inspire women and people of color to join this agency, change the face of STEM and explore the cosmos. Nichelle's mission is NASA's mission. Today, as we work to send the first woman and first person of color to the Moon under Artemis, NASA is guided by the legacy of Nichelle Nichols.

Mark Evan Jackson

Comedian

Years ago, on the way home from some con, I was on a flight with some unquestionable sci-fi royalty. As we deplaned, Michael Dorn knelt next to a seated Nichelle Nichols and said, "Be well, my Queen," and it was all I could do not to cry there and then. I think of it a lot.

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

By Special Request...

STORY: JOHN PEEL
ILLUSTRATION: LOUIE DE MARTINIS

Chief Miles O'Brien slowly relaxed as he sipped his drink in Vic's Place on the holodeck. It had been a rough day, as – once again! – Cardassian technology had broken down on Deep Space 9, this time taking down the alpha cascade circuitry on the main transmission network. It had taken O'Brien and his crew six hours to root out the problem and arrange a working bypass that would last them until Federation replacement parts could be shipped in. He really felt that he deserved this downtime and the cold beer before heading back to his quarters. Keiko wasn't off-duty for another two hours, and he didn't feel like being entirely alone just yet.

Vic's Place was the obvious solution. It was one of the most popular holodeck programs, and one shared by plenty of people. Some of the tables were occupied by holograms, but quite a number had real customers. Vic Fontaine was a personable manager/singer who specialized in Golden Oldies from seven worlds, and who employed a couple of Bajoran singers to spell him as needed. It was sometimes easy to forget that Vic was, in fact, a hologram himself.

Speak of the devil… O'Brien saw the singer heading his way, with Julian Bashir in tow. The two were talking in an animated fashion, and Miles adjusted his slouch as he realized that, whatever the two were discussing, he was likely to be called on to join in. He liked the young and rather brash doctor, but Bashir could get quite passionate at times – and generally at times when O'Brien simply wanted to relax…

"Miles," Bashir asked, before Vic could begin, "a question: How alive would you say holograms are?"

Not at all what he had been expecting. He blinked and gathered his thoughts as Bashir and Vic slipped into seats at the table. In the background, a pianist was playing lazy improvisations. "Well," O'Brien said finally, "two thoughts occur to me there. First – you're a doctor, so you're undoubtedly more qualified to decide on life than I am. And, second – well, second, it depends on how you want to define *life*. It's a bit tricky sometimes."

"See, that's my point," Bashir commented. "I mean, I'd agree with you that *normally* I'd be able to say whether somebody was alive or dead –"

"Oh, good," O'Brien muttered.

"But – holograms?" The doctor shook his head. "That's kind of tricky ground. You're an engineer, though, so it seems to me that it falls into your area of expertise, not mine."

O'Brien sighed. "Why not ask the *real* expert?" He gestured at Vic. "Straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak?"

"But Vic's *programmed* to believe he's alive," Bashir protested. "Uh – no offense, Vic," he added, a little embarrassed.

The singer grinned amiably. "None taken – after all, *you're* programmed to believe you're alive, too."

"Not programmed," Bashir insisted. "Born. You were *made*."

"Ah, well, you're getting on difficult ground there, Julian" O'Brien felt compelled to say. "I mean, Commander Data was *made*, too – but he's as alive as anyone I know. Starfleet even granted him human rights."

"That's my point," the doctor said, eagerly. "Data's an android, but one who is sufficiently complex and self-aware so he undoubtedly meets the criteria of being alive. Now – are holograms sufficiently complex and self-aware, too? I don't mean *legally*, but *practically*."

"The birds, the bees and the microchips," Vic murmured.

"Well, there was an instance on the *Enterprise* where a hologram certainly seemed to come to life," O'Brien admitted. "Moriarty… But that was a unique case." He glanced around the room. "Most of the holograms in here have minimal awareness – just sufficient to perform their roles as background actors, so to speak."

"But if I went up to…" Bashir glanced around and then pointed to a Bajoran couple at a distant table. "Those two, say. They're just background. But if I went over and spoke to them, they'd respond."

"Yes," the chief agreed. "The computer would augment their minimal programming and temporarily

give them a little personality. But it would vanish again once you left."

"But what about starring holograms – like Vic here?"

"Well, he's imbued with a greater degree of personality, of course."

"Thank you," the singer said, wryly.

"But how much greater?" Bashir asked.

"Very much greater," O'Brien said. "A completely different level. He has to interact and to improvise constantly. He also has to remember what he's said in previous interactions. He has to sing – and, more importantly, he has to be able to inject personality into his songs, otherwise they'd simply be dull and flat. So he has to *seem* alive. But whether he *is* alive… I'm not sure I can say. Sorry, Vic."

"Quite alright, my friend," the singer replied. "It's what I've been wondering myself. As you said, I was programmed to feel as though I were alive – but is it possible that I have grown beyond my programming?"

"How do you mean?" O'Brien's beer was forgotten now; he had become intrigued.

"You said that the computer augments programming to holograms as it is needed," Vic argued. "Could it have added enough extra to me to have caused me somehow to have skipped over from non-life to life? After all, this Data you mentioned was a cybernetic creature. At some point, he was merely components, but when they were assembled, he appears to have become alive."

Bashir couldn't completely hide his smile. "And, if you think about it, isn't that true even of living *organic* beings? One point, not-life; at another, life?"

O'Brien found himself growing more interested in the issue. "But all of the holograms created on the holodeck are formed and constructed by the station's computer," he pointed out. "And *that* is not alive… Could something non-living create true life? After all, Data was created by Dr. Noonian Singh, and *he* was alive."

"And we – who are living – created the computer that created Vic," Bashir responded.

"It's an interesting thought," the chief admitted. "And I honestly don't think I'm qualified to pass judgement on it." He looked earnestly at Vic. "Honestly, I'd like it if you *were* alive, but I can't see any way we could really prove it."

"I think I may have," Bashir admitted, softly.

"Really?" O'Brien was fascinated. "How?"

"Because he said something to me a short while ago that I don't believe he could have done if he wasn't alive."

O'Brien grinned. "This I have to hear. What was it?"

The doctor turned to the singer. "Tell him what you told me," he ordered.

Vic spread his hands. "I merely said that I had a wish."

O'Brien was puzzled. "That's it?"

"That's it," Vic agreed.

The chief turned to Bashir. "Julian, you've lost me completely. How does that prove he's alive?"

"Miles, *think!*" the doctor said eagerly. "He's *wishing* for something he doesn't have. Something he *wants*. If he is just a hologram programmed to react by a computer, *how* could he possibly wish for anything? All he would know, all he *could* know, is what he has. But to wish – ah, you have to be human to desire more than you already have. Or Bajoran," he added hastily, "or something else that's alive."

O'Brien had to admit that the doctor seemed to have something there. To desire something else meant that Vic wasn't entirely satisfied with his life as it was… and how could something that was merely a computer program – no matter how sophisticated – be dissatisfied? The ramifications of this possibility were intriguing – and startling. For one thing, if Vic was indeed alive… did they have any right to turn off his program? It wasn't like killing him – maybe more like putting him to sleep – but did they have any right to force him to sleep?

"IF HE IS JUST A HOLOGRAM PROGRAMMED TO REACT BY A COMPUTER, *HOW* COULD HE POSSIBLY WISH FOR ANYTHING?"

This was going to be a headache.

"So," Bashir asked, "are you going to help me to help him?"

"What?" O'Brien jerked his attention back. "Help him? To do what?"

Bashir sighed. "Honestly, Miles, there are times I wonder about you. Help him to get his wish, of course."

What am I now? The chief wondered. *A genii?* "You'd better tell me what it is," he said.

So Vic did.

* * *

Naturally, it wasn't a simple wish. But it did prove to be doable. Eventually. It took a week to organize, but once O'Brien's enthusiasm was engaged, he wasn't going to give up on it despite the obstacles in the way. Thankfully, he had a very understanding wife, and once Keiko had been informed she joined in. She understood how obsessive he could become when he was working on a project, and she supported him and listened to all of his thoughts.

The next person to convince was Captain Sisko.

"A duet?" he asked, baffled. "Vic wants to sing a duet?" He frowned. "Why bring this to me? Surely you can just program him another singer?"

"It's not that simple," O'Brien had to explain. "It's not just *any* duet – it's a *specific* partner he wants to sing with."

Sisko snorted. "Well, if having a wish *does* somehow make him human, having a difficult wish makes him *very* human. Very well, why do you need my help?"

"Because Federation law makes it illegal to make a hologram of a living person without their authorization. I'm sure you can see how such a duplicate could be abused."

Of course Sisko could, in any number of ways. "So you need to contact this person, then, and get their permission? I understand – but why do you need my help?"

"Because of who it is." O'Brien told him who was wanted.

"I'll do what I can," the captain promised.

* * *

There was a real air of expectation in Vic's Place. It had been a chore to arrange the schedules so that the main crew could all be present for this very special event. They were all there, gathered about the stage, and chattering excitedly amongst themselves. O'Brien and Keiko were seated with Bashir and Jadzia Dax. Captain Sisko had Kira and Odo at his table. Even Quark had managed to tear himself away from his bar for the evening, despite the lure of latinum to be made. O'Brien was surprised to see that even the perennial barfly Morn had deserted Quark's for once to silently nurse a drink at a more distant table. Well, it was a very special performance on a very special night. Nobody wanted to miss it.

There was a round of applause as the band came out and took their places. They started tuning up.

"Can't they get on with it?" Keiko muttered impatiently.

O'Brien patted her hand. "They want everything to be perfect," he reminded her. "It will be worth the wait."

"I know, I know…"

He couldn't blame her. They had worked so hard to arrange this, and the time seemed to have slowed to the pace of a lethargic amoeba. Bashir started tapping his fingers until Dax put her hand firmly over his to stop him. O'Brien glanced around, and saw that even Sisko was starting to fidget. Where was Vic? Building anticipation was one thing, but he might be overdoing it…

And then the lights went down, and a single spotlight illuminated the piano. A spontaneous burst of applause accompanied Vic as he moved down the stage to stand beside the instrument. He was grinning widely as he bent his head in acknowledgement.

"Ladies, gentlemen and gentlebeings," he said. He was trying to stay calm, but there was a detectable tinge of excitement in his voice. "Welcome to a very special night at Vic's place, and to a very special guest star. I'd like to thank everyone who helped to make this possible – but I suspect there might be a riot if I did. So, instead, let me introduce, by special request and for one time only…"

The spotlight moved away from him to the curtain at the rear of the stage, and there was a huge round of applause and cheers as he finished:

"Nyota Uhura!"

And the legend stepped into the bright light, her microphone at the ready, as she began.

"Beyond Antares…"

In memory of Nichelle Nichols, the Great Songbird of the Galaxy

Mic Fontaine

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TREKNOLOGY

TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

Suited and Booted

STEPPING OUT INTO THE FINAL FRONTIER

WORDS: CHRIS DOWS

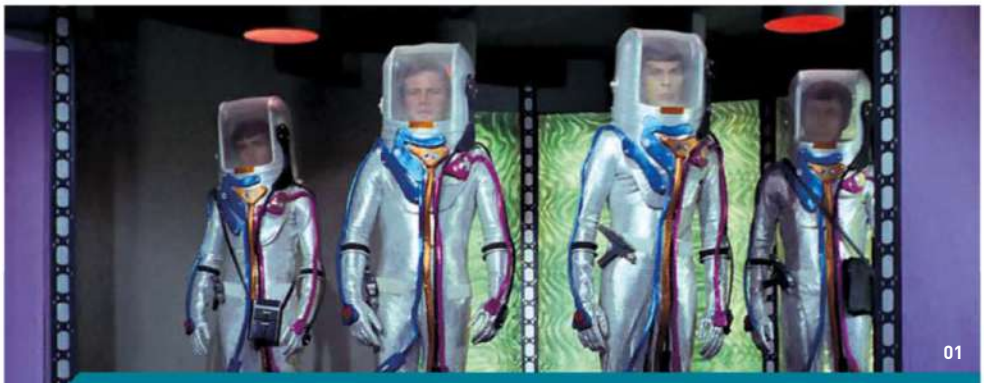
THE PRESSURES OF WORKING IN THE VOID

"Space is disease and danger, wrapped in darkness and silence." The words of the alternate reality Dr. McCoy are true enough for our intrepid characters traveling around the galaxy in a variety of starships, but what protects them when a situation forces a move outside the relative safety of their duranium alloy cocoons? This is where spacesuits or, as they are more commonly referred to in the *Star Trek* universe, environmental or EV suits come into their own.

While they don't feature heavily in some iterations of our favorite show (we had to wait until *Star Trek: First Contact* to see a TNG-era suit), some series, such as *Enterprise*, featured no less than seventeen spacesuit episodes with a variety of designs. And then there's *Discovery*. With opening titles featuring two animated spacesuit gloves reaching out to each other, emergency EV-S suits in nearly every background shot aboard the ship and Michael Burnham's obvious enthusiasm for EV suits (you can't keep her out of them), the importance to *Discovery* of spacesuits is only matched by the enormous level of protection they need to afford in the most hostile of conditions.

Like most space technology, it was first mentioned in fiction – American science writer Garrett P. Serviss's 1898 novel *Edison's Conquest of Mars* mentions 'air-tight suits', and with the early 20th century's explosion in aeronautical engineering, the first pressurized suit designed to supply oxygen in the ever-increasing altitudes being reached was patented by Fred M. Sample in 1918.

By 1934, American aviator Wiley Post reached the literally dizzying heights of 40,000 feet thanks to his B.F. Goodrich-manufactured rubber pressure suit, and while they paved the way for subsequent partial pressure 'Henry' suits for the newly formed NASA's X-Plane series, the first true spacesuit designed to support life in a vacuum, quite by accident, is credited to Dr. Siegfried Hansen. Tasked by the USAF to investigate overheating problems with vacuum tubes, by 1957 Hansen had built himself a vacuum chamber to work in at Litton Industries – and a suit, the Litton Mark 1, to keep him alive during his experiments. As NASA's race into space progressed into the Gemini series, the need for considerably more protection than that offered by pressure suits led to them approaching Litton, leading to the RX-1 suit in 1964. However, it was the Dave Clark Company whose iconic G4C suit allowed the first American spacewalks for the Gemini missions.



01

LAYERS OF DIFFICULTY IN SPACESUIT CREATION

In keeping with all good Treknology, there's been a parallel evolution of design and function over the decades to 'real world' spacesuits. That said, it's noteworthy the first time *Star Trek* showed a spacesuit in "The Tholian Web", veteran costume designer William Ware Theiss deliberately avoided the bulky EV suits worn by NASA's Gemini and Apollo astronauts, instead creating a sleek one-piece garment that allowed considerably

easier movement than the ILC Dover-produced A7L spacesuit used for the moon landings.

Despite their glittery appearance, The Smithsonian Institute's curator of International Space Programs and Spacesuits, Dr Cathleen Lewis, praises Theiss's employment of lightweight, futuristic protective materials and the excellent view provided by the rectangular helmets. There's also a nod to the life support and waste management systems all EV suits need to incorporate with the network of tubing on the exterior of the suits worn by Captain Kirk and his landing party, providing a strong link to 'real' engineering that's the hallmark of *Star Trek*'s interpretation of technological advancements. The comparative sleekness of *Star Trek*'s EV suit designs continues from *The Next Generation* onwards, with variations on external protective plating across the chest and shoulders supporting a compact back-mounted life support system found throughout all subsequent series. Some versions feature control systems integrated into protective forearm sleeves, that also act as hard connects for the all-important gloves. Some configurations, such as those seen in *Star Trek: First Contact*, include magnetized boots – particularly useful when fighting the Borg or, in the case of *Strange New Worlds*, playing "*Enterprise* bingo".

The greatest design variations come with the helmets. Some are relatively snug, like NASA's classic 'fishbowl' shape. Others, such as the oversized version worn by Michael Burnham in "The Vulcan Hello", provide a particularly impressive field of vision. However, there's more to walking in space than what you see on the outside. The latest UTC Aerospace Systems and ILC Dover spacesuits worn by NASA's astronauts consist of multiple layers, ranging from a micrometeoroid liner to a pressurized restraint, aluminized insulation, and a gas retention bladder, explaining why they're so bulky. But this isn't the whole outfit – underneath is a snug fitting liquid cooling ventilation suit worn over similarly hi-tech underwear. This multi-layered approach can be seen in the ribbed under-suit worn by T'Pol and Malcolm Reed in the *Enterprise* episode "Sleeping Dogs", once again spotlighting *Trek*'s attention to scientific detail.

EXTRA-DANGEROUS VEHICULAR ACTIVITY

During the lifetime of *Star Trek*, there have been thousands of real (outer) world spacewalks, ranging from a brief capsule exit to extended repair missions. They've not all been conducted by NASA; other agencies have been equally active in space and have their own variations of spacesuit design for use inside – and outside – spacecraft, such as the Russian Orlan and Chinese Feitian suits. Talking of Extra-Vehicular Activity, or EVA, this is where things get really serious. In addition to supplying oxygen and removing carbon dioxide, the ability to withstand orbital debris impacts and maintaining enough pressure across the wearer's body to stop their fluids turning into gases, the EVA suit has got the additional problem of solar load. Depending on where the astronaut is working, the temperature can swing from -150 in the shade to +120 degrees Celsius.

Then there's the problem of moving around in low or zero gravity situations. NASA's solution came in 1983 with the Extravehicular Mobility Unit, or EMU, which pretty much transformed the spacesuit into a single-person spaceship. While they allowed Space Shuttle personnel to operate for up to seven exhausting hours, they had the disadvantage

02

01 Previous page: the spacesuits of *Star Trek: The Original Series*, as seen in "The Tholian Web"

02 Spock prepares to apcewalk, in a scene from *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*

03 Astronaut Bruce McCandless II during an Extra-Vehicular Activity in 1984, a few meters away from the cabin of Space Shuttle *Challenger*. Photo: NASA

04 A scene from *Star Trek: Into Darkness*

(or absolute advantage if you don't fancy floating off into deep space) of being continuously tethered to their mothership, so in 1984 NASA experimented with the Manned Maneuvering Unit, which truly brings spacesuit Treknology and real-world engineering into docking stations. If you compare Lockheed Martin's MMU used by astronauts Bruce McCandless and Robert L. Steward during the STS-41-B shuttle mission to the device employed by Spock to enter V'ger in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, there's some astonishing similarities. Both feature powerful back-mounted rectangular packs with twin telescopic arms, allowing the user to control the main propulsion system and multiple attitudinal thrusters. Both are detachable and interchangeable, which is a big thing in spacesuit design; making equipment 'one size fits all' to reduce costs is a major engineering problem in itself. Spock's Starfleet MMU is smaller and, given the distance he travels into the entity, far more powerful and with a greater range, and the NASA version – designed and developed nearly a decade after the film was released – doesn't allow the wearer independent life support once they disconnect themselves. But in one of NASA's most famous photographs of the MMU over the Earth, McCandless has his knees raised up – just like Spock did just before he fired his thrusters.

03

04

LIFE IMITATING ART AND THINKING OUTSIDE THE COSMIC BOX

Star Trek's EV evolution has mostly been triggered by scenarios created by the writers for particular characters and storylines. This ranges from *Enterprise*'s combat-ready Military Assault Command Operations (MACO) spacesuits to condition-specific outfits like the high-temperature exosuit worn by the alternate reality Spock in *Star Trek: Into Darkness*. As far as real-world development is concerned, things are similarly dynamic thanks to the rise of independent space contractors, planned missions to Mars and radical advances in materials design. While it's more a pressure suit than a spacesuit, the stylish one-pieces worn in 2020 by the SpaceX Dragon crew not only incorporated several *Trek*-style features with their slim-fitting design, flexible, lightweight materials, single connection points for life support systems and helmet-integrated communications, they were realized by science fiction film designer Jose Fernandez. While this is reversing the usual trend of costume designers taking cues from actual scientists and engineers, the idea was a good one – the Dragon suits incorporated some of most significant technological advances seen so far.

Talking of creative approaches, a decade before, artist Ted Southern founded Final Frontier Design (now that sounds familiar), who so impressed NASA they're currently working with the Paragon Space Development Corporation to develop the next generation of integrated EV suits for the upcoming Artemis program B.

But it's not all blue-sky thinking; there's plenty of traditional scientific research still going on. Take the hugely ambitious intelligent hybrid SmartSuit being developed by Dr Ana Diaz Artiles at Texas A&M University. Working in conjunction with NASA's Innovative Advanced Concepts Program, her team has proposed a suit that has the wearability of the SpaceX design and, thanks to its soft robotics technology, a self-healing protective skin built into the outer membrane and sensors feeding continual information and enhanced sensation to the wearer, can be worn for a wide range of extravehicular activities.

But what about *really* pushing the envelope? If you thought the time-traveling Red Angel suit developed by Michael Burnham's parents in *Discovery* (then worn by her to destruction) was 'out there', consider the crazily named Spider Flyer-Walker outlined by Lockheed Martin in their 2016 technical paper for colonizing Mars. While it's not been officially adopted by NASA as yet, this extraordinary concept has eight legs, is rocket powered and allows its user to crawl, walk or hop across the ice-covered surface of Phobos. Granted it's not red, but you could almost mistake its appendages for wings...

ANDORIAN ADVENTURER

Noah Averbach-Katz is really living the dream. As a kid, he worshipped *Star Trek* and attended conventions. Now, a couple of decades later, he's not only married to *Discovery* actress Mary Wiseman, but has guest starred as the Andorian, Ryn, in the *Discovery* episodes "Scavengers," "The Sanctuary," and "There Is A Tide...," voiced the character of the Mirror Universe Andorian character Rae'Yeet for *Star Trek Online*, and even become a popular convention guest. *Star Trek Explorer* recently caught up with Averbach-Katz at a con, where he chatted about his love of *Trek*, Ryn's redemption arc, and the joy his mom is taking in his success.

WORDS: IAN SPELLING

01

"I LOVED THE IDEA OF A REDEMPTION ARC THAT DOESN'T END HOW YOU WANT IT TO END."

How deep was your love for *Trek* as a kid?
My mom was a *Trek* fan. There were two rules in my house: my father said I couldn't be a Republican and my mother said I had to be a *Trek* fan. As long as I followed that, I was good to go. I grew up watching TNG reruns and *Voyager*'s final seasons. When I was 12 or 13, I watched *Enterprise* with my friends. We saw all the TNG movies. I went to UC Santa Cruz. I did a syndication vindication of "Time's Arrow" there. I played Riker and did the whole "throw my leg up over the chair" thing. There was a lull while I was at Juilliard (where he met Wiseman in 2011), but even there, I went to Goodwill and bought a VCR/TV, and my mom sent me "The Best of Q" episodes. My friends would be like, "What the hell is on?" Then, they'd sit and watch four episodes of Q with me.

Years later, you helped Mary audition for *Discovery*…
Rumors started that *Trek* was coming back. It happened. Mary had an audition for *Discovery*. It was a self-tape. It was some techno-babble, and I was super-excited to help her read lines. Three weeks later, she sat down at dinner with me, my dad, and my cousin. She leaned over and said, "I got *Star Trek*." I was like, "*What?!*" She was doing a play and the play finished. The next day, she flew out to Toronto, and the rest is history.

01 Noah Averbach-Katz opposite his wife Mary Wiseman, playing Sylvia Tilly, from the *Star Trek: Discovery* episode "The Sanctuary"

02 Donning Andorian makeup

03 Averbach-Katz with *Star Trek* actor and director Jonathan Frakes

What advice or information did you give her about the franchise?
Two things. For that tape, they asked her to do a slate, essentially a full body shot, so they can see your entire body. She came out for her slate wearing a pretty flowery dress; loose and flowing, very summer. I said, "You need shoulder pads." She went out and came back with military-fitting shoulder pads that really fit the costume. After that, I said, "What episodes can I show her? She's got three hours before she starts shooting. What can I show her that runs the *Trek* gamut?" I showed her "The Offspring," my favorite TNG episode. I felt that would resonate with her. Then I showed her *Trekkies*, Denise Crosby's movie. I felt that'd give her the spectrum of what she was in store for.

You auditioned for Spock on *Discovery*. Take us through that process…
One of the first times I was up in Toronto was one of the first times they were filming *After Trek*, which they were doing remotely. I had all these pictures of me at conventions on my phone. I was showing them to everybody because I was so excited. Everybody's like, "Please leave me alone. I don't know you. I don't know why you're showing me these pictures. Do we need to call security?" I showed one to Akiva Goldsman, and he pulled out his phone. He started showing me pictures of himself at conventions. "How cool is this?" He was like, "We've got to get you as an extra." We're going back and forth about how excited we are. He tells me, "I did this in 1976." We're talking the whole time through *After Trek*, the whole way to the after-party after the premiere of

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the first episode, and we're still talking while sitting at a table and eating a fruit plate. He said, "The person you need to talk to is right here," and that was Alex Kurtzman. Alex goes, "It's nice to meet you."

Right as we're in the middle of this conversation, somebody interrupts us and goes, "Do I know you?" I said, "There's no way." They're like, "I'm pretty sure I know you." I said, "How?" They said, "Were you on an episode of *The Good Fight*?" I said, "Actually, yeah. I did an episode." The person replied, "I loved your performance." Alex said, "Oh, you're a real actor?" I was like, "Yeah, Mary and I went to Juilliard together." He said, "Alright." It registered. From there I got to audition for Spock, which at the time, funnily enough, they called Tom the Andorian. I read it and thought, "This is not an Andorian. This is f--king Spock!" It was so much fun to get to work on that. The tape went well, and then this other role came up, probably a year later.

I probably didn't get too close, and I'm glad. I did my three episodes as Ryn. For months afterward, leading up to episodes airing, I'd wake up in a cold sweat in bed and say, "Was I Andorian enough? Is Jeffrey Combs going to get angry at me? What's my head-canon for this?" I was freaking out. If I were to play Spock, I'd be dead. It'd just be too much pressure. I got to be on set and watch Ethan (Peck) work. He's amazing. I'm glad I don't have to deal with that pressure because I'd absolutely crack.

As a *Trek* fan, how cool was it to get in that makeup and become an Andorian?

It was surreal, amazing, and very strange. It adds to the surreal element when you're already a *Trek* fan. You're meeting people and you're going to be on the show. Then, you look in the mirror, and there's a completely different face staring back. The first time I put it on, somebody brought me into Olatunde Osunsanmi's office to see him and Doug Aarniokoski, who was directing my first episode, to do a makeup check. I thought, "I should ask them about the character." I came in and said, "Isn't it cool?" That's all I could get out.

Later, I had a moment. My first scene was Ryn surviving getting shot. I was on the medical bed. Sonequa (Martin-Green) and David (Ajala) were above me, talking quietly. "He's gonna make it. How are you? Good to see you again." This was during rehearsal. I've got my Starfleet tunic on. Even better, I've got my Starfleet medical blanket, the shiny one. There's a display above me that's got a full Andorian on it. It was all so iconic. I'm on the bed. They're rehearsing their reunion, and I'm in my makeup. My eyes are completely open. I'm smiling up at them, nodding along with the scene. Sonequa looks down and, very kindly, but also concerned about

04

"THERE WAS A SECOND PART OF HIS STORY THAT WAS TAKEN FROM HIM, AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT SAD; THAT MAKES IT WORSE."

how it's going to look on film, goes, "Is that what you're going to do the whole time?" I was like, "Oh, I have to act! S--t!" From that moment on, I couldn't leave the excitement behind, but I had to balance it.

You gave Mary advice about *Trek* when she auditioned. Once you landed Ryn, what advice did she give you?
She knew how the set would run, how the timing would go. "This is going to take this long. This is going to go over. You'll have to come back on this day, because I know you're not going to finish." That was the biggest set I've ever been on. It runs almost like an action movie. She told me who to talk to, when not to talk to people, and gave me the lay of the land. Also, when I was shooting, she'd maybe come in a little early. I'd say, "Is it okay?" She'd say, "It's great. You're doing good."

04 Cleveland "Book" Booker (David Ajala) and Ryn (Noah Averbach-Katz) in trouble in "The Sanctuary"

What did you like about Ryn?
I loved the idea of a redemption arc that doesn't end how you want it to end. I feel so often, especially growing up on *Trek*, redemption arcs are your classic one-hour TV show where at the end they go to the new planet or go back with their love interest. For Ryn, his redemption was regaining his confidence, regaining his identity in the face of impending death. Everything was not tied up. There was this air of mystery about what he was doing before, what his life could've been like afterward. People wanted to know more. Everything is usually explained, revisited, or continued, but that's not always how life goes. As an actor, you want your character to live forever. I wanted Ryn's Andorian body to be replaced by a robot body. After stepping away and thinking about it in terms of story, I liked that it was a redemption arc that was complete, but that there was still so much left to do that he didn't get to do, and was left unfinished.

Ryn had good moments with Book, Burnham, Georgiou, and Osyraa, but how special was it to have two nice scenes with Tilly?
Both moments were awesome. I had to fight with every bone in my body not to play a love affair between them, because it definitely wasn't in the text. It was so much fun to work with Mary. We hadn't worked on anything together professionally since Juilliard. The first thing we did together, we were coming in and I said, "Let me talk to the captain." Mary was in control of the scene and the set. She was in her element. I was glad everyone on set could see that Mary was very good at this -- and way better than her husband. And we had a good time, too.

What did you make of Ryn's death?
You know what's coming when you know the property as well as I do. We have a character who's downtrodden, has been through a lot, but has a heart of gold. He's best friends with this charming rogue. He survived once, but the bad guys are out to get him. I knew he was going to die. As a watcher of the show, the abruptness was shocking, and for a little bit people were like, "Wait… that's it?" With some space behind it, I wound up liking how that shock and suddenness happened at the end of his arc. I also liked that he got to finish his part of the story. There was a second part of his story that was taken from him, and that's what makes it sad; that makes it worse.

05 Behind the scenes on *Star Trek: Discovery*... Averbach-Katz with fellow actor Kenneth Mitchell, who's appeared in numerous episodes, in different guises

06 Averbach-Katz with his wife, Mary Wiseman...

07 ... and with Doug Jones, in full makeup, as Captain Saru

We're here at a *Trek* convention. What would 12-year-old Noah think of what's happening today?
Twelve-year-old Noah would be like, "That Ryn guy is cool, but I really want to get into Michael Dorn's line and get an autograph!" It's a strange thing, to act all your life and grow up to be a professional actor, but I never had a dream of being on *Star Trek*. It wasn't like, "I'm at the convention, and I want to be up there." So, it has been surreal, in a great way, to be here.

Your mom, who turned you on to *Trek*, is here. What's that been like?
I brought her up on stage for a costume contest! It's beyond cool. I think she has ascended to another plane of existence, turned into a crystalline entity, and is just floating around.

LARRY NEMECEK'S

A FISTFUL OF DATA

MAKING SENSE OF THE FUTURE

So are you feeling the year-long *Trek*, yet?

For those of us who remember the long span of *Star Trek* famine after 2005 (and yes, the Kelvin movies were nice, but hardly episodic TV), the idea of having 50 weeks of "fresh *Trek*" this year across five series has been amazing. We've become so spoiled!

You got that nowhere better than this year's *Star Trek Day* live and global virtual spectacular, with the franchise having its own platform for breaking news, special insights, and heartfelt tributes – including our late, great Nichelle Nichols.

And yet... with all that... there's a rumor going 'round that some fans took a breather during that "hiatus" in July, before *Lower Decks* and unending weekly new *Treks* resumed. How about you?

It's really okay to remember the "fallow years", and count your blessings now – or even feel a bit overindulged at times. It's completely natural that you might be feeling a bit overwhelmed. That's why we have "A Fistful of Data" –and "that's why we're aboard her"!

WORDS: LARRY NEMECEK

New questions and queries bridging old, new, and "breaking news" new *Star Trek* will be cropping up constantly – and some won't be solved or even capped in an online instant. So, send your queries into Trek production and background to startrekmagazine@titanemail.com or via larry@larrynemecek.com, or @larrynemecek on Twitter

And hang on—we have plenty in the mailbag to check out already:

NEVER PROMOTED?

In seven seasons of *Voyager*, Ensign Kim was never promoted, even though Lt. Paris was demoted and then promoted again. What is the real reason for this terrible tragedy?
DAVID CHENG,
LOS ANGELES

You and I both know, David, how so many fans have both bemoaned and bemused for years about "young Harry" and his lack of advancement across those seven long saga-years of poor lost *Voyager* – including actor Garrett Wang himself! "The world's oldest ensign," they crack.

But let's look at this from a different angle. You mention Tom Paris himself, who –remember – was actually a big risk and "reconstruction project" undertaken by Captain Janeway: he was a former Maquis and Starfleet washout, despite the DNA of an admiral for a father. Think of the weight on her shoulders when she felt Paris' demotion was needed – and her

FIRST AMONG EQUALS

If Klingon women are considered equal to men, why was Grilka's house in danger when her husband died?
ZAHEER MASKATIA
VIA INSTAGRAM

Look what we have here, Zaheer – a unique vantage point over three different centuries to view Klingon gender equality!

There are some clues from ancient times, too: inklings of historic Klingon women warriors and leaders from the legends of Kahless and Lukara herself right up through today. Or perhaps the still-murky actual story of "Aktuh and Maylota," the presumed title couple of Worf's favorite Klingon opera.

But it's the three later centuries at different times in *Star Trek*'s history we know so well. When Grilka's husband Kozak dies in Quark's, in the DS9 story, "House of Quark", the rights and status of Klingon women do seem at low ebb – and she is indeed in danger of losing her property and position until Quark "fights" her scheming creditor for it. Before Gowron and the High Council, no less! Which, as you scan the Council room, does indeed include no women – as was mentioned when the Duras sisters, denied a seat in TNG's "Redemption," tried to place their brother Toral there as a puppet. And being banned from sitting on the High Council – or not – seems as good a barometer of overall social equity as any in their society.

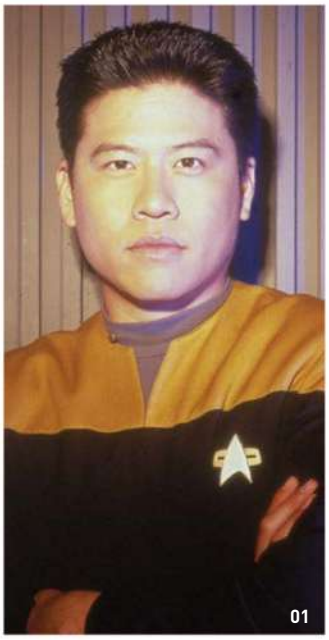
Only a year or so earlier, Worf's ill-fated mate K'Ehleyr was "offered a seat" on the Council – but that came as an offer from the scheming, outsider-politician Gowron, angling for power any way he could and unclear how solidly he could back it up.

But this is all in the latter 2300s. A century earlier, the standing of Klingon women was brighter, when two actually served as chancellor – albeit in unusual cases. The late chancellor Gorkon's daughter Azetbur, of course, rose to take his seat in the wake of his assassination – and she eventually oversaw the original

01 Ensign Kim

02 L'Rell led the Klingon Empire as head of the Klingon High Council

03 **When** Grilka lost her husband, why was she not considered an equal?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relief at his restoration (in "Thirty Days" and then "Unimatrix Zero").

But the bottom line was, Tom was never advanced from his *starting* rank, either. In fact, excluding all the Maquis who got those provisional equivalency ranks initially, no one aboard but Tuvok *ever* won a promotion throughout the *Voyager* odyssey (just as Season Four got underway).

But Harry was chief of operations and a bridge officer, you say? I direct you to poor B'Elanna: she was chief of engineering and never got beyond her simple junior-grade lieutenant rank –and a Maquis field commission special, at that!

In fact, all in all, you might say Janeway's lack of advancements for her crew are uniform (no pun intended) – and might have even been a savvy survival strategy. After the Caretaker, no one could know the duration nor the scope of their voyage homeward, but it was a sure thing folks would not be a part of normal Starfleet transfers and cross-training. And what if Janeway's "promotion freeze" was just protecting against a ship eventually full of too many senior officers and not enough juniors?

Given all that, I'm gonna say Harry's career stall was no different than anyone else's aboard, regardless of their job or background. Let's just hope that, once home, Starfleet made up for his and fellow Voyagers' stalled lost-career time. (Hey– thanks to *Lower Decks*, we see Tom Paris three years later and he's *still* only a full lieutenant!)

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round of UFP peace talks leading to the Khitomer Accords. But was Azetbur more a "family case" of sympathy (not unlike dead American officeholders whose wives fill out the rest of their term rather than a harbinger of change?

Over 30 years earlier, back in 2358, the Klingons' "Mother" L'Rell actually came to the chancellor's throne by a different path: blackmail. Or hard bargaining, if you like, with other houses to leverage her access to a devasting weapon that would have ripped huge chunks out of Q'onoS itself. As it was, L'Rell became ruler and ended the grinding Klingon-Federation War in one fell swoop — though she would remain under pressure from jealous would-be councilors and rivals for years. As of today we are not sure how long waste her time in office –or whether her reign extended another eight years or so, to the Organian crisis and the Sherman's Planet affair.

For whatever leaps forward for Klingon women the leadership of L'Rell and Azetbur brought on, it seemed to be for naught nearly a century later, the great pendulum of inevitable social change swung back to patriarchy —and Grilka's dilemma. What will we see Chancellor Martok, and his descendants lean into?
Come to think of it, when will we finally see "current" Klingons, especially in the *Picard* era?

CANON FODDER

PUTTING CONTINUITY IN THE FIRING LINE

04

Ready to take our basic "Fistful" deep-dive mission even further, and connect the dots of *Star Trek* in an even broader way?

The coming of *Strange New Worlds* has brought many a new wrinkle to the Prime universe of 2259, some six to seven years before the earliest glimpse we've had for years of James T. Kirk's Federation era aboard *Enterprise*. But in one particular arena, fans have been absolutely barraged by all-new revelations piling up from SNW that may challenge their presumably long-settled "truths" surrounding one of the first and most quaint alien cultures shown to us: the Gorn.

We talked here last issue about some of the unique issues SNW has waded into regarding legacy characters and concepts, as exciting as the new series and its return to "stand-alone" storytelling is. The thread of stoic security officer La'an Noonien-Singh is already intriguing enough, given her infamous Augment relative – but now we learn of her family's traumatizing deaths at the hands of none other than the Gorn! She's left with some guilt as one Gorn attack's intended sole survivor as a child... yet matured into a Starfleet career, avenging them as the backbone of her security training's motivation.

That timing would seem to counter what we have always known about the Gorn, from one of the most infamous *Star Trek* slugfests of all time: Kirk's mortal combat with a Gorn captain seen in "Arena," occurring eight years later in 2367 (as the canon timeline flies) , in TOS Season One.

Yet across three episodes of *Strange New Worlds*' premiere season, during Pike's post-*Discovery* assignment, we see his crew come up twice against the Gorn – and a host of onrushing factoids regarding them. First, that the traumatic loss of the colony ship used by La'an's family even brings up the species at this time at all, and –after the events on Finibus III and Valeo Beta V – it seems as if deadly Gorn encounters must be about to swamp the whole Federation.

But, apparently, they have not. So far, only the *Enterprise* crew – with La'an almost as if some kind of locus? – seems to be crossing paths in deadly fashion with the reptillioid Hegemony citizens. Indeed, her family's tragedy is still only listed as an "unconfirmed" first contact – meaning intel on the entire species is still vague and being evaluated.

And that's why none of these points need conflict with all we know from the beloved TOS classic – namely, that Kirk's Metrons-forced encounter and his unfamiliarity are

DATACORE

LARRY NEMECEK

As a longtime *Star Trek* author of bestseller *The* TNG *Companion*, editor, consultant, interviewer, and archivist, Larry Nemecek hosts *The Trek Files* weekly for Roddenberry Podcasts, livestreams *Trekland Tuesdays Live*, and leads the Portal 47 monthly "backstage" fan experience and Trekland Treks location site day tours from larrynemecek.com. He is also producer of *The Con of Wrath* documentary, and his updated *Star Trek: Stellar Cartography* map/book set continues to help fans and *Star Trek* TV creators alike.

indeed the Federation's first contact with the Gorn.

It would hardly be the first time for such an oversight. Remember, as we have seen with Captain Archer's unaware encounters with both Borg and Ferengi a century earlier, true first contacts can be deceiving. Sometimes, all it takes are records to be bungled or even overlooked, if not followed up with insight, to allow actual first contacts to just be missed.

Much will depend on what happens in coming years on SNW – and whether the Gorn just have a habit of turning ups in the face of Lt. Noonien-Singh, wherever she is.

But contact aside, our beleaguered 1701 crew can also attest to the frightening norms of the Gorn that once again seem far from what Kirk experienced – and what has proved even more perplexing to veteran fans: that hyper-metabolism fueled by a killer instinct that left us all a little faint and white-knuckled. How does all that square with Kirk's often-mocked slow-motion adversary?

Easy, if we realize that the deadly minions SNW has brought us, although lightning-fast, are all only hatchlings and young Gorn, a day or two old at best. The gruesome host-hatched babies are seen to be so competitive they even attack and eat the slower of their own siblings. And then, within a day or two, they've developed lightning-fast, wall-hopping moves that can easily overwhelm older, smarter humanoids. It's all a bit shocking, until we remember that Kirk's Gorn was a ship captain – and thus, an elder of his people.

It can be a long metabolic road from hatchlings bred to survive at all costs to the strong but far more sedate nature of an elder like the Gorn Captain.

What's more, the Gorn provide one of the nexus points from one quantum universe to another, apart from the so-called Prime – and illuminate the issues of first contact and physiology even further. In the so-called "Kelvin" universe, the Gorn are well known to mainstream Federation contacts at least a generation before their Prime counterparts. Dr. McCoy, for example, reports having performed a "Caesarian section" on a pregnant female Gorn, revealing not only a trust but the fact that at least some native females in that universe undergo live birth – without eggs or gruesome host-body egg carriers.

And in the "Mirror" or Terran Universe, the Gorn are seen as being in cahoots with the Tholians of the 22nd century, allied against the Terran Empire. What's more, Slar the slavemaster Gorn, fought by Mirror Archer aboard the relic *U.S.S. Defiant,* looks far more humanoid, and articulated at the joints and neck, than Kirk's acquaintance. In fact, Slar even in his leathery reptilloid nature, still feels far more "settled" and parental than those SNW babies — and logically, ought to. (I'm also left wondering: did original Mirror Lorca collect his trophy room's Gorn skeleton in battle, or did he just pick it up from a random trader?)

04 The *U.S.S. Enterprise* crew come face-to-face with their demons in the SNW episode, "All Those Who Wander"

05 Kirk battles a Gorn, in the TOS episode "Arena"

Maybe we could even re-examine exactly what we *thought* we knew from "Arena." Check the transcript: No one mentions the unseen Gorn until the Metrons do, and Kirk even refers in his log to a creature "the Metrons call a Gorn." Could his real-life enemy not jibe with what he'd seen or even heard of the Gorn previously, still amid scattered reports? Could the Metrons' self-described "preparing" of their battle planet include altering of the gravity to make the fight more fair for Kirk – and more lumbering for the Gorn?

It's certainly left Spock a bit numb and seemingly unmindful of these 2259 attacks when the Metrons hold back time, in AD 2266; perhaps he's presenting as PTSD despite his Vulcan stoicism. Both Spock and Uhura of course do know what these Gorn can do... but in "Arena" they still react, in turn, at just being gobsmacked by the little critters' intensity.

The whole experience of new-vs-old Gorn truths is really just an exercise in how you view the ability of *Star Trek*'s rich universe to avoid fatigue and burnout. Sure, the issues around the Gorn seemed settled — but that's only because we never got back to them these past 50+ years! (That fairly tame and very 24th-century Gorn wedding on *Lower Decks*, notwithstanding!)

Only our SNW stable of writers and creators know what's in store for the Gorn storyline, where there is plenty of room still to flesh out their history, biology and juxtaposition with all we knew before. It can happen.

But isn't it about time we revisited their history and culture... and wrung as much dramatic onscreen potential out of them as possible?

Meanwhile, here's where I always say: follow their channels! More and more, we have *Star Trek* creatives who are all too happy to answer questions and reveal non-spoiler insights into the how and why of their work.

LOST & FOUND

ARCHIVE IMAGES RETRIEVED

Each issue, we delve into the data core to retrieve a long-lost image from a classic *Star Trek* series or movie. This issue, after our deep-dive into the Gorn File, remember this critter in "Cannon Fodder"?

WORDS: LARRY NEMECEK

With all the focus on the contrast from the hyper Gorn killer hatchlings of *Strange New Worlds* to the original slow-moving Gorn captain of *TOS*'s "Arena," there was another "live-action" iteration of our reptilloid friends – and here's how he began.

Slar, the Gorn slavemaster in the 2150s Mirror Universe seen amid *Enterprise*'s "In a Mirror Darkly," was indeed a CGI creation as seen onscreen. But exactly how to update the classic yet primitive 1966 figure came via an original 2D concept color sketch by visual effects producer Dan Curry… that led to this midway step for digital modelmakers.

Yes, the creative team really worked out the kinks for Slar's form via this figure machette, built up from clay in January 2005 by makeup lab sculptor Earl Ellis, from designer Mike Westmore's team. From there, details could be molded and stretched to the producer's satisfaction before CGI modeler supervisor John Teska at Eden FX could produce the final, as-aired model.

And even then the digital result followed form over the actions of stunt coordinator Vince Deadrick Jr., who performed as "Slar" to provide a real-life adversary opposite to Scott Bakula's Captain Archer for their chase and combat.

But the real bridge from "Arena" to *Strange New Worlds*… all started with this little statuette.

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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO...

NYOTA UHURA

FIRST APPEARANCE: Filmed - "The Corbomite Manoeuvre", 10 November 1966; Aired – "The Man Trap" 8 September 1966

NUMBER OF APPEARANCES: 107

PLAYED BY: Nichelle Nichols (95 – TOS; movies 1 to 6; DS9; *Prodigy*), Zoe Saldana (Kelvin Universe movies), Celia Rose Gooding (*Strange New Worlds*)

No one better embodies Gene Roddenberry's utopian ideals for humanity's future than Uhura. As the *Star Trek* franchise has developed, the venerable communications officer of the original *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701 has become a prism for the times in which she's dramatized, whether that be evolving gender politics, burgeoning racial equality or fundamental onscreen representation – Uhura represents the best of us in every screen version, in every timeline. This was never truer than in 1966. Yes, she wore a risqué minidress with a skewed plunging neckline. Yes, she was often the damsel in distress. Yes, she didn't get equal screentime compared to her fellow *male* characters. But today, we better understand the importance of her onscreen presence, the power of seeing diverse cultures and creeds onscreen to empower and elevate.

In the late 1960s, Nichelle Nichols stepped onto that bridge as a Black, female officer. It was a big deal. Big enough for Martin Luther King Jr. to famously tell Nichols not to quit the show, that her presence on US TV screens in such an optimistic vision of the future was making a difference. Uhura showed that humanity could get past its trivial differences. It would take another 50 years for a Black female Starfleet officer to lead a *Star Trek* show (Sonequa Martin-Green as Michael Burnham on *Discovery*), but it all started with the beautiful, gifted Nichols, *that* uniform and her funky comms earpiece. Without her, there's no Crusher, Troi, Dax, Kira or Janeway, let alone Seven, Tilly, Detmer, Mariner, Raffi, Ortegas or La'an.

We're going to boldly chronicle not only an officer who can speak 40-odd alien languages and rose through the ranks to captain her own starship (not onscreen but definitely canon), but also an actor who stood tall and proud to inspire countless generations that followed her.

TIMELINE

2239/2240 – Born near Lake Simbi Nyaima, Kenya, Earth

225? – Served as cadet aboard the *U.S.S. Gallant*

2259 – Joined the crew of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701 as a cadet serving initially under Captain Christopher Pike though primarily under Captain James T. Kirk, progressing up the ranks to commander as the ship's communications officer

2285 – Assigned to Starfleet Training Command with the bulk of the bridge crew of the *Enterprise* under the captaincy of Spock

2285 – Following the de-commissioning of the *Enterprise*, is assigned to a requested post at Old City Station as transporter officer; assists then-Admiral Kirk and former *Enterprise* bridge crew to steal the NCC-1701 by illegally beaming them onboard

2287 – Helps save the Earth from an alien probe; faces court martial for role in assisting in stealing a Starfleet vessel; is exonerated with her crewmates (and newly resurrected Captain Spock) due to heroism in saving Earth; is assigned to freshly re-branded *Enterprise* NCC-1701-A alongside the original ship's bridge crew captained by a newly demoted James T. Kirk

2293 – Stands down as *Enterprise*-A communications officer when the starship is decommissioned following successfully ensuring the Khitomer Peace Conference between the Klingon Empire and the Federation happens on schedule

2301 - 2305 – Promoted to Captain of exploration vessel *U.S.S. Leondegrance*; leads more than 100 first contact missions and explores the Lesser Magellanic Cloud

2333 – Retires

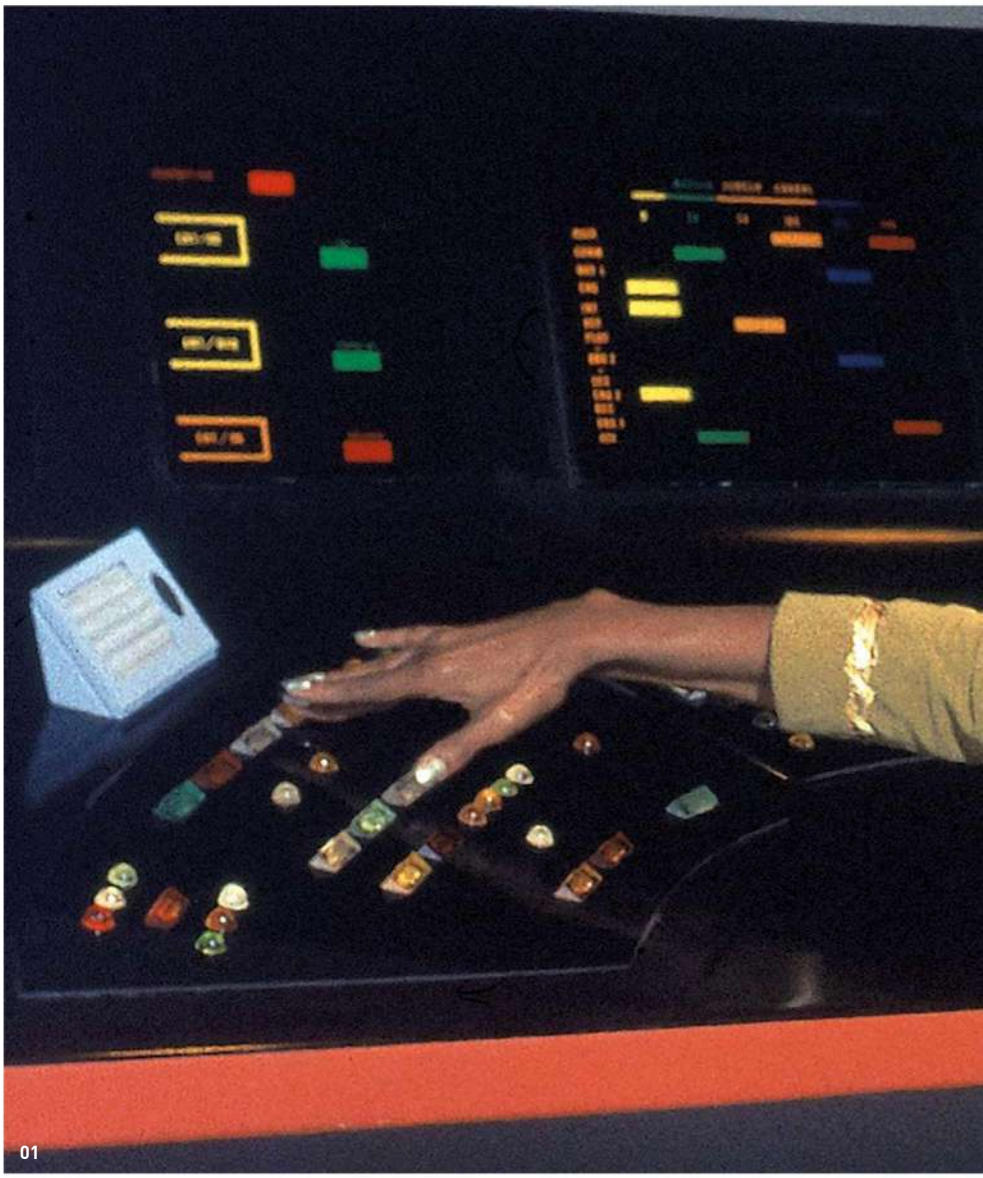
HAILING FREQUENCIES OPEN...

01 Nichelle Nichols as Uhura, in "The Corbomite Manueuver"

02 Robert Ruark's book, Uhuru

Perhaps Gene Roddenberry's greatest gift was casting – the two bridge crews he assembled remain the most iconic across the franchise. When prepping *The Original Series* in 1966, the initially unnamed communications officer was the last major role cast (not counting season 2's Monkees-clone, Chekov). Nichols, who'd previously worked on his series, *The Lieutenant*, was a late but clear winner.

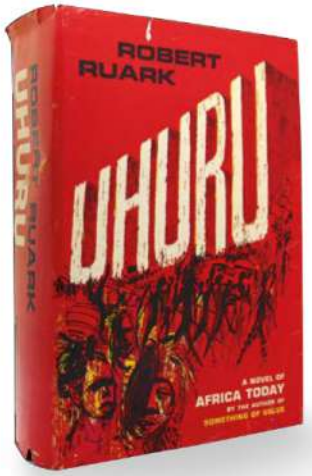
Nichols' and Uhura's vast contribution to *Star Trek* – which we'll attempt to pay tribute to, even though we'd need an entire issue to do them justice – began during that selection process. According to Nichols and producers Robert Justman and Herb Solow, she and Gene Roddenberry named the character during the audition process, as the actor had been reading Robert Ruark's 1962 book *Uhuru* – the title being the Swahili word for freedom. This beyond-perfect nomenclature was made canon in "Is There In Truth No Beauty?" when a mind-melding Spock voiced the meaning. Such was Roddenberry's grace in allowing his cast



01

ownership of their roles, that – ignoring the slight ignominy of Uhura not being given a full name for more than 15 years after her creation – when *Star Trek* author William Rotsler proposed the Swahili word for "star" after multiple non-canon alternatives were used in print, Roddenberry gave Nichols final approval. So, 'Nyota' Uhura became unspoken canon from 1982… only established onscreen in 2009's Kelvin movie! In fact, the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual* cited a "*U.S.S. Samara Uhura*" - one of the names used prior to 'Nyota' being agreed upon.

Uhura's function on the *Enterprise* bridge bounced around a bit as the show found its feet, with her division shifting from command gold to ops red. This initial indecision ended up adding in-universe strength to the character as Uhura was frequently depicted as capable in a variety of bridge roles, including acting science officer in Spock's stead. By *Strange New Worlds*, this facet of her character had become so pivotal that she became, in Pike's words, a "prodigy" whose phenomenal gift in languages narrowly beats out her other talents. Back in 1966 however, that future unknown, Nichols considered leaving as she felt Uhura didn't have the same profile as her male counterparts, but Dr. King's missive paid dividends as Uhura's role did expand from season 2. The truth of the iconic civil rights leader's comments has been evidenced time and again – not least in Whoopi Goldberg paying tribute by lobbying to join *The Next Generation* cast. When current Uhura incumbent Celia Rose Gooding took on the role, the young Uhura was a prodigious runner, musician, singer and scientist. Who else but Uhura could sing to save the ship?



02

KELVIN UNIVERSE TIMELINE

2255 – Cadet at Starfleet Academy

2258 – Assigned to the *U.S.S. Farragut* then re-assigned on request to *Enterprise* as communications officer, after the fleet deploys all ships in reaction to an attack on Vulcan

2260 – Attends the re-christening ceremony of the NCC-1701 prior to joining the crew for a five-year exploration mission

2263 – Re-assigned to the *Enterprise* NCC-1701-A following the destruction of the original *Enterprise*

03

04

05

BOLDY GOING...

In terms of onscreen legacy, it's tough to know where to begin. US television's first interracial kiss with Kirk in "Plato's Stepchildren" is an obvious place, but how about when she hopped over to navigation on-demand in celebrated Romulan cat-and-mouse episode "Balance of Terror", or was instrumental in finding the missing Galileo shuttle in "The Galileo Seven"? She's also performed engineering work on consoles and broken technology ("Who Mourns for Adonais?") and often been the one who recognized a problem before anyone else on the ship.

Uhura's character wasn't limited to live action, and interestingly, it was in *The Animated Series* where Uhura first truly found her potential. In "The Lorelei Signal", Uhura got to command the *Enterprise* – admittedly, due to a siren song incapacitating her male crewmates, but she stepped up, nonetheless. And she took command again in "Bem", and convinced the master computer of the Omicron Delta Shore Leave Planet that the *Enterprise* wasn't a slave, in "Once Upon A Planet".

03 The then controversial kiss shared between Uhura and Kirk, in "Plato's Stepchildren"

04 Uhura in action in *Star Trek: The Animated Series*

05 Uhura continued to shine in the *Star Trek* movies

In the first two movies, there was, admittedly a lack of more substantial on-screen character development. Although some of her scenes in the first two movies were more progressive, they were rather perfunctory. Things did look up in *The Search for Spock*, where Nichols got to display more grit and sass during the stealing of the *Enterprise*, and facilitating the rescue of Spock. (As a sidenote, for *Star Trek III*, Nichols requested Uhura wear a black skirt, instead of the pants she'd worn in *Wrath of Khan*, so the actress was also key to the character's empowered femininity). This playfulness continued into the rest of the original crew's movies, albeit with more questionable success following the fun 1980s hijinks of *The Voyage Home*.

For the most part, Uhura as portrayed by Nichols in the flesh was more a symbol of progress than agent of it. But that symbolism was crucial for so many, at a time when the trajectory of equality and racial acceptance hung in the balance. Uhura empowered generations of African Americans, and women in general. Today, as onscreen representations finally reach a better balance, Nichols' Uhura laid the foundations for where Zoe Saldana and Celia Rose Gooding get to take her.

06

UHURA+

When the success of Pike and Spock's appearances on *Discovery* triggered the development of a spinoff, it was welcome news that the other returning TOS character alongside the half-human science officer would be Uhura. Already beefed up and contemporized by Saldana in the Kelvin timeline, the depth that only modern episodic television can bring primed Uhura for a three-dimensional fleshing out that Nichols could only have dreamed of. One season in, we've already seen Uhura's doubts about Starfleet, and how she was originally going to study at the University of Nairobi, where her parents taught. However, a shuttle accident killed her parents and her brother, and the newly alone Uhura instead decided to follow in her grandmother's footsteps by attending Starfleet Academy. Her interactions with the *Enterprise* crew, and Pike in particular, have fed directly into the character and her decision to stick with Starfleet, providing more character development in nine episodes than was previously spread over decades.

Add to that her moving relationship with Andorian engineer Hemmer (played by blind actor Bruce Horak), her varied talents and growing confidence, and it's exciting to see where the character goes next, especially in the charismatic hands of Gooding.

As the world – and *Star Trek* with it – evolved and issues of quality, diversity and social justice developed, it's been only natural that Uhura, a ground breaker from day one, reflected that evolution herself. So, as we warp into the 2020s and beyond, the polymath Starfleet prodigy is set on a path that will see her captain her own ship and rise to the leadership of the Federation. Her African heritage is no longer simply an adornment, represented by a zebra-print bedspread in her quarters. The hope that Nichols brought to television in the late 1960s is now being fully realised. When you think of the cultural impact of *Star Trek*, you think of Uhura.

06 ...Celia Rose Gooding is set to return to screens in 2023 as Nyota Uhura

07 Zoe Saldana has played Uhura in the more recent big screen *Star Trek* outings

THE *OTHER* UHURA...

When Paramount and J.J. Abrams "rebooted" *Star Trek* via an alternate timeline, Uhura underwent a few key changes. She became a contemporary of James T. Kirk, which immediately established her as peer with her male counterparts, and she was "promoted" to fourth lead, often edging out McCoy. She engaged in a romantic relationship with higher-ranking Spock, one of her training officers. Her first name is finally spoken by her Vulcan lover (following it not being "given" as an Easter Egg in her first meeting with a drunk Kirk). Finally, her precocious proficiency is established. It's Uhura that pinpoints Nero's return and mobilizes the entire story. And she most definitely speaks Klingon.

This alternate Uhura is newer, stronger, better. She still wears a form revealing mini dress, but now it's an expression of identity, rather than a chauvinist network diktat. Saldana's incarnation of Uhura continued the character's trailblazing reflection of women and race in Western culture and hopefully we'll see her return for at least one more adventure in the future.

07

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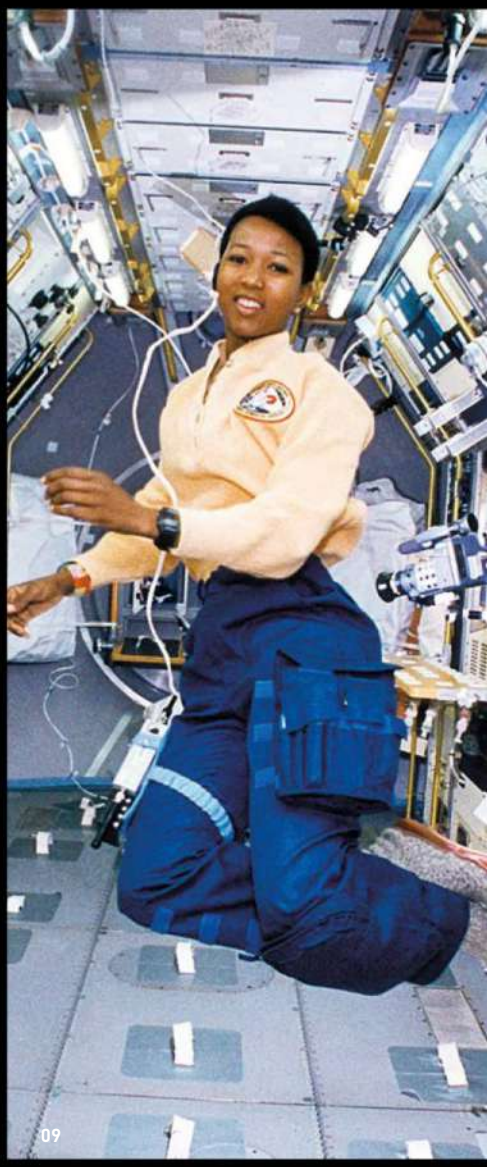


09

HAIL STORM

Playing Uhura was often a double-edged sword for Nichols. The reality of Uhura being relegated to the background wore on the actor. Her frustration famously bubbled to the surface while filming "The Trouble With Tribbles", where 14 renditions of "Hailing frequencies open, sir" was the final straw: "If I have to open hailing frequencies one more time, I'll smash this goddamn console!" Typically, Roddenberry would channel that anger onscreen, in a line in the "The Man Trap": "Sometimes I think if hear that word 'frequency' once more, I'll cry..." Not quite as forthright, but at least an acknowledgement.

08 Uhura and Pavel Chekov in "The Trouble with Tribbles"

09 Dr Mae Jemeison was inspired by Nichelle Nichol's' portrayal of Uhura. Photo: NASA

The role also impacted Nichols' pay. It's been stated that she was initially paid more than DeForest Kelley, James Doohan and George Takei, but the studio objected, due to her subsequent "bit part" status. Her fee was "reduced" to $140 per day, which actually worked out as more money, if she worked all seven production days on an episode. Which she did more and more, as the producers began to explore Uhura's potential.

10 The original series crew with *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, and others, alongside the test shuttle, *Enterprise*, in 1976. Image: NASA

11 Actress Nichelle Nichols and Airborne Astronomy Ambassador. Image: NASA

12 Uhura, as seen in *Star Trek: Prodigy*

13 Uhura in the background of a scene from the *Deep Space Nine* story, "Trials and Tribble-ations"

NICHOLS & NASA

Alongside being the first African American actress to immortalize her handprints in the cement outside LA's famous Chinese Theatre, getting a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and receiving the ultimate honor of voicing herself on *The Simpsons*, Nichols made a real-world contribution to space exploration as a NASA Ambassador from 1977. Six months into her tenure, Nichols had boosted applications from below 100 to more than 1,600 –with most being from women or ethnic minorities. She was named NASA Woman of the Year in 1979. Dr. Mae Jemison decided to become the first African American female astronaut because of seeing Nichols on *Star Trek*, then being emboldened by her NASA work. In 2016, Nichols received a Saturn Lifetime Achievement Award for her work on *Star Trek* and for NASA. Yet again, Nichols proved a ground breaker, leading where so many others have since followed.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Nichols' Uhura has "appeared" in:

- DS9 episode "Trials & Tribble-ations" in archive footage
- Crew photographs seen in Kirk's cabin in *Generations* and in Prime Spock's possessions in *Star Trek Beyond*
- *Prodigy* as a training hologram (archive audio only)

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

Paghabi

STORY: CHRIS DOWS
ILLUSTRATION: LOUIE DE MARTINIS

"Doctor Crusher to the fencing room. Medical emergency!"

Picard knelt beside the shuddering form of Guinan, prying the foil from her vice-like grip. In all his years of knowing the El-Aurian, he had never seen her stumble, let alone collapse as she just had. Something was *very* wrong here, and as if to reinforce his fears, the *Enterprise* lurched violently, knocking him off-balance as the airy room was bathed in a scarlet glow.

"All hands, red alert. Captain Picard to the bridge."

Guinan's convulsions increased, her eyes wide and white in the back of her head.

"Number one, report."

"It's best you see for yourself, Captain. It's a little hard to describe."

A thunderous rumble shook the *Enterprise*, heralding the arrival of Doctor Beverly Crusher and Nurse Ogawa who stumbled through the entrance doors. One look at Jean-Luc's face, and Crusher knew things were serious.

"What happened?"

Rising, Picard straightened his uniform and looked down at his friend with a sigh.

"She… fell. That's all I can tell you, Doctor."

Crusher ran her tricorder over Guinan's shaking body and looked up with a frown. "We need to get her to sickbay. And you need to get to the bridge."

With a nod, Picard strode out of the room.

* * *

Entering the bridge and striding to the conn, Picard studied the extraordinary scene on the viewscreen, signaling Riker to mute the red alert klaxon as he passed his first officer.

"Data, what am I looking at here?"

Data turned to face his captain.

"It appears to be a rift in the space-time continuum. Emissions from the fissure have overwhelmed sensors and long-range communications. I am attempting to recalibrate to gather further data."

Picard stared at the swirling maelstrom of color framed by the ragged slash of normal space. He'd seen fractures in the continuum before, but nothing as vibrant and energetic as this. A brilliant pulse of light flashed across the bridge, causing the ship to shake again. Worf's gruff voice boomed from behind Picard's command position.

"Object detected on the boundaries of the rift, Captain."

Out of his peripheral vision, Picard saw Troi rise from her seat to his left. Leaning forwards, he focused on the single point of pulsating light which scurried frantically between the opposing sides of the widening tear.

"What is it, Data?"

Data's fingers became a blur on his station's controls. He allowed himself a frown to mimic frustration.

"Unknown, sir. Sensors are barely operational, but it possesses a massive energy signature and a significant level of electromagnetic radiation across all spectrums."

Riker looked up from his screen, his eyes narrowing as he watched the object increase in speed around the opening rift and shared the observation he'd made with the bridge.

"Its movement isn't random. There's a pattern emerging, which suggests intelligence."

A huge shockwave hit the ship, knocking Troi back into her seat and Worf off his feet at his security station. Retaking his position, the Klingon spoke with urgency as waves of energy continued to batter the *Enterprise*.

"What if it is the cause of the rift? The phenomenon is increasing in size, matching the direction of the object."

Data turned again from his console.

"I am detecting building inverse graviton emissions which are already threatening our ability to go to warp. If the rupture continues to expand at this rate, it could destabilize this entire sector."

As Picard weighed up the mounting threat, Worf voiced what many were reluctantly thinking.

"Recommend we neutralize the object to prevent the rift spreading further."

Troi looked to Picard, concern etched in her face.

"Captain, I'm not comfortable attacking an entity we know so little about. Can we not attempt to communicate with it?"

Picard looked to Data, who shook his head.

"All comms are still unavailable."

Picard took in a breath and exhaled, using the brief time to consider the situation. It might be the only chance they get to stop the rift's progression and keep his crew safe.

"I agree with your sentiments Counselor but given the level of threat facing us, we have to act on the limited information in our possession. Lieutenant Worf – target the object with a low yield photon torpedo. Let's try to disable rather than destroy it."

Worf indicated readiness and, with a heavy heart, Picard gave the order to fire. The bridge fell silent save for the increasingly powerful impacts from the fissure's energy waves as the crew watched the torpedo streak towards the energetic object. It detonated with a flash, extinguishing the light from the object and immediately halting the turbulence. But then, a low frequency hum vibrated through the ship, escalating rapidly in frequency and volume to a deafening squeal. Everyone but Data clutched the sides of their head to stifle the sound. Abruptly the sound stopped, only to be replaced by the screams of Deanna Troi who, overwhelmed by some unseen force, twisted in pain then slumped back into her chair, unconscious.

Shaking off his disorientation, Riker staggered to his feet and over to the counselor as Picard ordered a situation report. Data's need to re-initialize the now completely overwhelmed scanners meant he couldn't immediately assess the situation. Worf's confirmation the object had been deactivated by the torpedo was interrupted by a message at his security station.

"Crusher to bridge. Guinan has left sickbay. She's not - "

Another communication came in, overriding the doctor's terse voice.

"Bridge, this is transporter room one. I have Guinan here and she's - "

The sound of a struggle could be heard, then the channel closed as a warning flashed on Worf's console.

"Captain, someone is attempting to activate the transporter."

Head still spinning from the cacophony, Picard forced himself to his feet.

"*What?* Override."

Worf moved fast, but not fast enough.

"Transport in progress sir… to the location of the object."

Picard's stomach lurched. It had to be Guinan.

"Number one, get the Counselor to sickbay. Data – get those sensors back online. We need to know if the rift's stop spreading. Worf – you're with me."

* * *

Picard entered transporter room one before the doors had fully opened. Before him, the pad was dimmed to standby. Striding to the control interface, he ignored the groans of the technician on the floor, directing Worf to see to him while Picard studied the readouts.

"WITH A HEAVY HEART, PICARD GAVE THE ORDER TO FIRE."

He estimated she'd been in space, presumably unprotected, for over two minutes, well past the limit most humanoids could expect to survive.

He had to hope El-Aurians had a little more resilience to the harshness of space.

The interference on the telemetry systems was considerable from the rift's emissions, so Picard used Guinan's inputted coordinates and hoped neither of them had moved. The transporter pad shimmered into life and as the cycle began, but alarms winked on to show a lock couldn't be maintained without more power. Picard boosted the signal to maximum and, after a few tense seconds, an outline shimmered into existence at the front of the circular dais.

"Captain!"

Worf's shouted warning came a split second after Picard's realization this wasn't the familiar form he'd hoped to see. Guinan pulsed with

the same brilliant aura as the object, eyes closed and head tilted back as if she were looking to the sky. Glancing down at the controls, Picard could see a mismatch with the pattern buffers.

Something was inside her.

Picard activated an emergency forcefield around the frozen form, the barrier fizzing in time with the light radiating from Guinan's body. As the technician rose unsteadily on his feet, Worf joined Picard at the control station, checking for toxic levels of radiation in the room or other dangers.

"Picard to sickbay."

"Crusher here."

"Doctor, we have retrieved Guinan but she has been… invaded by some unknown presence."

"Give me a few seconds to set up a quarantine field then beam her directly here."

"Understood."

By the time Picard entered sickbay, Doctor Crusher was well into her scans of Guinan from outside the glowing containment field surrounding the surgical table. On one of the nearby treatment beds, Troi lay unconscious, watched over by nurse Ogawa with care and intent. Crusher moved over to the main diagnostic screen on the opposing wall to Troi's position. It displayed a real-time map of Guinan's central nervous system.

"Doctor. Report."

Crusher glanced over to Picard with a frown.

"Some entity has incorporated itself into Guinan's body and is feeding off her electro-chemical emissions."

This confirmed Picard's worst fears. The mysterious object they had attacked without provocation was a living being, one they had never previously encountered. His heart fell, but there was no point in regret; he had made the decision based on the information available at the time, and now he had to deal with the consequences. Through the field, Picard saw the distorted form of Doctor Crusher turn to Guinan's glowing body.

"One thing I can't understand is Guinan's reaction to this parasite. She doesn't seem to be putting up any kind of fight. And I don't know how long she can withstand this drain on her energy, Jean-Luc."

Picard walked around the perimeter of the field, trying to think through the situation. His attempts to make sense of it were rudely interrupted by his communicator.

"Riker to Captain Picard. Sensors are back online and Data reports the rift is continuing to expand at a faster rate than before. Comms are still out so we cannot alert Starfleet Command of the situation."

Picard studied Guinan. Her hands were folded across her abdomen, and she had a look of strange contentment on her face.

"Understood, number one. Stand by."

Picard nodded to himself. Things were starting to connect.

"Doctor, could it be the entity is using Guinan to recover from our attack?"

Crusher raised an eyebrow and considered the suggestion.

"It's certainly a possibility, but why Guinan?"

Picard regarded his old friend. There were so many things he didn't know about her, yet they shared a bond of understanding exclusive to his associations.

"El-Aurians have a unique relationship with the space-time continuum. It cannot be a coincidence Guinan collapsed just before this situation arose, nor would Guinan have acted as she did without extraordinary reason."

"True, but what if her El-Aurian characteristics made her the most viable and attractive host, and the entity coerced her somehow? It must have protected her from the vacuum to ensure its host survived."

An alarm sounded, and the display showing Guinan's nervous system turned red. On the table, Guinan's faint smile changed into a grimace of pain, her knuckles white with the intensity of her grasp.

"Vital signs are plummeting. She's going to arrest if I don't intervene immediately."

Nurse Ogawa quickly rose from Troi's bedside to assist the Doctor. Picard's communicator sounded again.

"Captain, engineering reports we can no longer generate a warp envelope in this area of space."

The edge in Riker's voice told Picard everything he needed to know.

"Get us out of here, number one. Full impulse."

Crusher manipulated the medical screen interface. On the surgical bed, a cowling slid into place over Guinan's chest.

"There's no evidence of any exterior contamination but if the life-form decides to jump ship into me, on no account drop the containment field. I'm going in."

Before Picard or Ogawa had time to protest, Crusher passed through the barrier and began working on Guinan. The large screen started to flash warning signs on Guinan's schematic, and Crusher looked directly to Picard with a grim expression.

"The entity has coalesced into a concentrated form at the base of her brain stem. I can target it with a pulse of ultrasound and destroy it."

Picard glanced over to Guinan's vital signs, all of which were flattening out.

"Will it save her?"

Crusher reached for a handheld emitter from a nearby tray and fine-tuned its controls.

"If I don't kill the creature, she will certainly die, given these readings."

And there it was. A classic *Kobayashi Maru*. Did Picard attempt to save his friend and eradicate a potentially unique life-form, or leave it to consume Guinan and create a situation with yet more unknown factors? Neither option was attractive, but he had to decide regardless.

"Proceed, Doctor."

Crusher nodded and moved to Guinan's head, gently moving it to one side then activating the small device. Bringing it into contact with the base of Guinan's neck, Crusher took a breath and moved her thumb to activate the beam.

"STOP!"

All heads snapped to Deanna Troi, who was sitting bolt upright on the treatment bed, a pleading hand outstretched.

"Beverly, please, leave Guinan alone. She is in no danger."

Crusher looked to the readings on the medical screen. All of Guinan's life-signs were plateauing.

"Deanna, whatever this thing is, it's killing Guinan."

"I have a telepathic link to Guinan through the entity. She tells me she has willingly allowed *paghabi* to feed from her, and that it will not take her life. It is no threat to us either, Captain. All it needs is sustenance to complete the task we interrupted."

Picard threw a glance to Crusher, who stood hesitantly with the emitter in hand, then moved towards Troi, still wary of the unfolding events.

"Explain, Counselor."

Troi spoke calmly, in her usual warm, measured tones.

"*Paghabi* exist to repair natural tears in the fabric of the universe. They share an ancient, deep bond with El-Aurians, who help them in their work when called upon. It's the remnants of a symbiotic relationship that stretches back eons. As soon as it has recovered, it will return to its work and mend the rift on its own – but the longer it stays here, the longer the restoration will take."

As Troi finished her explanation, the indicators stopped flashing on Guinan's readouts, her life-signs beginning a gradual crawl to normal. Crusher stepped back from her patient, placed the emitter back on the tray and deactivated the containment field as Picard turned to her.

"Doctor, you mentioned *paghabi* is feeding off electro-chemical energy from Guinan. Is there any way you can help accelerate the healing process?"

Crusher thought for a second then nodded.

"I could isolate the energy frequency and generate a concentrated dose. I'd have to work through Deanna to ensure I got the feed right, but it could work."

Picard looked to Guinan, who now had a faint smile on her lips.

"Picard to bridge. Number one – reverse course, best speed to the rift."

"Captain?"

Riker's voice was incredulous.

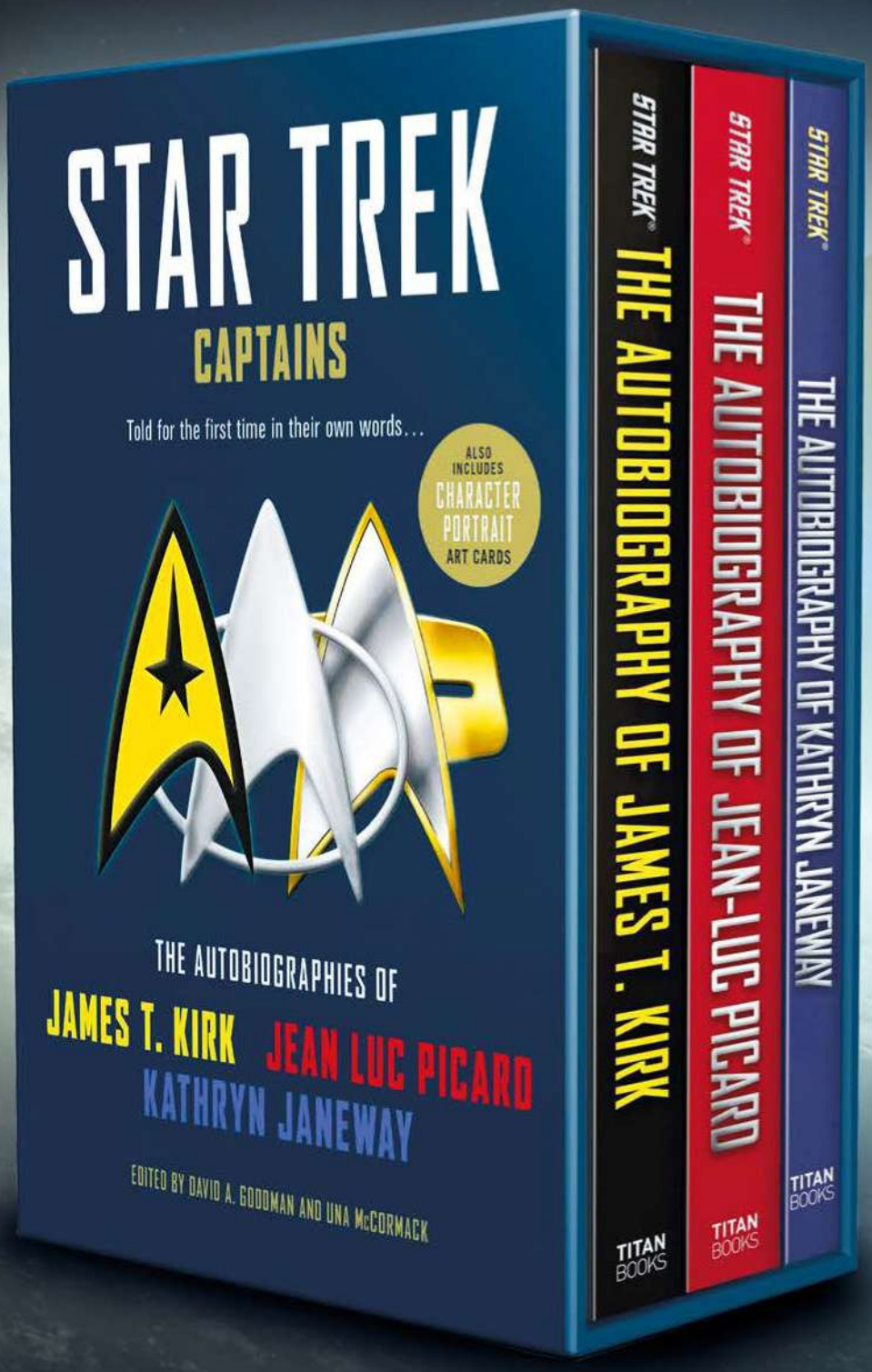
"I'll explain everything in a few minutes Will. For now, carry out my orders."

"Aye, sir."

Picard walked over to Guinan and placed his hand gently on hers.

"Contact me as soon as *paghabi* is recovered enough to leave the ship Doctor. I've got a lot of questions to ask… and some apologizing to do."

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



A SPECTACULAR BOXED SET WITH SLIPCASE AND CHARACTER ART CARDS

FEATURING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF KIRK, PICARD AND JANEWAY

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ALIENS AMONG US?

In The Neutral Zone, we present a pair of expert *Star Trek* fans with an aspect of *Trek* lore to debate, and then get them to pick sides!

Star Trek aliens... which have had the most impact, and why - and which of the "one offs" that left the most impact would you most like to see return?

Who are your favorite *Star Trek* aliens?

Little Green Man:
MICHAEL CLARK

The Changeling:
BUNNY SUMMERS

#STETheNeutralZone

Head to The Neutral Zone to add your opinion to the debate. Follow **@StarTrekMag** on Twitter, **@StarTrekMagazine** on Facebook, or email **startrekmagazine@titanemail.com**

01 Spock, perhaps the most famous *Star Trek* alien of all, if half human

02 The Ferengi - a species that grew over time, and two *Star Trek* series

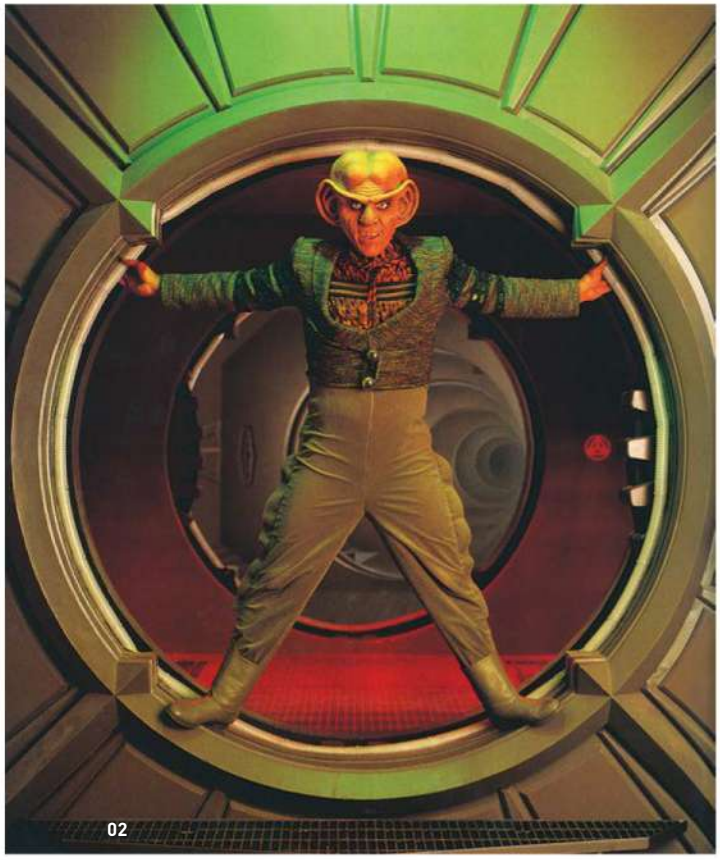
03 Rene Auberjonois' portrayal of a Changeling proved a hit with many fans

01

MICHAEL CLARK: This isn't an easy question, Bunny, considering how many strange new worlds we have visited with all the various incarnations of *Star Trek* over the years. For me, though, the race that has had the most impact are the Vulcans. I have enjoyed seeing race grow over the decades with the various story lines and all the fascinating Vulcans characters we have met. How about yourself?

BUNNY SUMMERS: I think when thinking about this, the first thing I thought of were the Borg. A classic impactful enemy. But really, when I thought about it more, I came to realize that for me the aliens that had the most impact were from *Deep Space Nine* – the Changeling and the Ferengi.

MC: The character of Spock exploded with *Star Trek* in its original run, and he was one of the most popular of the cast. With that in mind, as the series progressed, we discovered the mind meld, the nerve pinch – and then the episode "Amok Time" introduced the mystic side of Vulcan, their ancient traditions and culture. Fans (including myself) wanted to know more about the Vulcans and while we would see stories about them in *The Next Generation*, and were introduced to the character of Tuvok in *Star Trek: Voyager*, it would take *First Contact* to show us the importance of the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Vulcans. Vulcan was a founding member of the Federation and from here we were led to *Enterprise*. That series shows us the journey that both the Vulcans and Humans took and while it wasn't always perfect, the story telling was enjoyable and established them as one of the most important races in *Star Trek*.

BS: I think the Vulcans were the obvious alien to think about. Spock, and indeed Leonard Nimoy, mean a great deal to such a large number of fans worldwide; we would definitely not have *Star Trek* without Spock and a Vulcan or two. But for me, I really became a fan of *Star Trek* with DS9, and it was interesting to me to see how the Ferengi had evolved from the basic, primitive style creature of *The Next Generation* to a fully complex species, that displayed and valued the corporate greed of our own society today. And with the Changelings, it was interesting to see humanity from someone that really wanted to be part of it and explore what being human is alongside how we view ethics and morality.

And on a personal level, I really admired René Auberjonois, who played Odo, he was an amazing character actor and is much missed.

MC: When it comes to the "one off" races for me, it's the Vaadwaur from the *Star Trek: Voyager* episode, "Dragons Teeth". I really enjoyed this episode and always felt this deserved a follow up. Who would you have liked to have seen again, Bunny?

BS: It might be an unpopular choice, but as a fan of *Predator*, I did like the Hirogen. A lovely ode to a film cult classic. The plot of *Voyager* meant that we would encounter so many different alien species, it must have been so much fun for the make-up and costume departments.

Also, the new Gorn in *Strange New Worlds*. When they were off screen, they were incredibly menacing, and it was great to feel that there could be a real threat to Starfleet out there once again.

MC: In "Dragons Teeth", Seven wakes up the Vaadwaur from a nine-hundred-year sleep, and while at first they seem like a good ally for Janeway and the crew of *Voyager*, we soon discover that they are the complete opposite. This will always feel like a wasted opportunity for me within *Voyager*. This could have been a season long or at least a multi-story arc. The idea of a new ally could have been pursued for a number of episodes, and over time Janeway finds the real truth about the Vaadwaur. This would have allowed for greater character development and to really see the consequences of Seven's actions in waking them up. These were always a much better villain than the Kazon and we only saw them the once.

BS: While I'm more a fan of the ridiculous episodes rather than a more serious episode like "Dragons Teeth", *Voyager* honestly had some really great storylines to showcase new aliens, especially in the episode "Tsunkatse". How could you go wrong with a guest starring Jeff Combs and a side of The Rock?

I think for me though I would have liked to have revisited the character Melora Pazlar from DS9, or at least seen another Elaysian. It was very interesting as an able-bodied person to see even on screen, how the world still has very far to go with accessibility needs, even in Starfleet. I'm also a fan of Andorians and absolutely loved the *Enterprise* episode, "The Aenar". I wished for a long time we would be able to see more of them and how they would function outside of their homeworld and was very happy to see Lieutenant Hemmer in *Strange New Worlds*. I wonder what awaits us in future episodes?

TREK THROUGH LIFE

FANDOM AT THE FINAL FRONTIER!

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

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04

COSPLAY COLLECTIVE

Assimilating knowledge and stories from *Trek* fandom's finest costumers...

Romulans and Royalty

"*Star Trek* was the first show I saw as a kid in France where there was a Black woman that I wanted to become when I grew up: Uhura," recalls cosplayer Giraffe. "I love the strong female characters in *Trek*, this possibility of a future where everyone can shine and grow to realize their full potential. That's why I love cosplaying *Star Trek* women! The Romulan Commander, Uhura and her alter ego Neve, Captain Freeman, Owosekun, etc."

Giraffe is also intrigued by Romulans. "I love their complexity, cunningness and ruthlessness, and TOS is my favorite series," emphasizes the cosplayer. "The Romulan commander is an incredible leader: she is strong, decisive, and smart. She commands the respect of everybody around her, even of her opponents." Giraffe has already set her sights on her next cosplay: a Romulan uniform from the SNW episode "A Quality of Mercy."

From Bajor to Cardassia

"*Star Trek* is about the future we can have if we unite as beautifully diverse human beings and work together for the betterment of our world. And that means something," declares Kaylee Schuler. "[Cosplay is] an art form that's unique in that it allows you to not only interact with the media you love, but to become a part of it in a way."

Kaylee takes special pride in their Bajoran and Cardassian cosplays. "My Bajoran cosplay is super fun, very eccentric and bright. I wanted to capture a blend of human and Bajoran fashion and explore how a young, confident, rebellious Bajoran woman might express herself." For the Cardassian, Kaylee designed and sewed the outfit, styled the wig, and created all the prosthetics. "I wanted to create a character who would fit right in with the ones in the show while still feeling very much my own. Thus, Anari Koren was born."

THE IDIC AWARD

Honoring fans who demonstrate *Star Trek*'s idealistic values in real life.

"I love *Star Trek* because it inspires me to create, dream and strive for a better tomorrow, no matter what," explains Jay Justice, a dedicated fan who works to embody *Trek*'s values. "My goals are always to center marginalized people and listen to voices that usually go unheard... My calling is to make sure everyone who needs accessibility can get it and the best way to do that is to listen first and act second."

Pictured here in cosplays that include Captain La Forge and a TOS uniform, Jay values teamwork. "You're not alone, you don't have to fight against the injustices of the galaxy alone. You've got your crew and you should rely on them just as much as they rely on you."

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01 Kaylee Schuler as a Cardassian...

02 ...and as a Bajoran

03 Cosplayer Giraffe as Neve

04 Cosplay at San Diego Comic-Con in 2022

05 Jay Justice in a TOS costume. Photo: Tony Ray

06 Jay Justice and LeVar Burton. Photo: Jason S. Colflesh

07 Khitomer Battle by Brad Jenkins

08 Locutus and Borg Queen by Brad Jenkins

07

08

QUANTUM ARCHIVES

Chronicling the creativity of *Star Trek* fans through art, crafts, and more!

Future Friends

From the moment *Picard* was originally announced, one of the things I most wanted to see, apart from the TNG cast reunion, was Michael Dorn in the Worf makeup and baldric one more time," details fan artist Sean McMahon. "Worf coming back to life in the [San Diego Comic Con] trailer made me instantly want to draw my take on his new silver fox look."

With *Lower Decks* and *Strange New Worlds* being his current favorites, Sean was overjoyed when it was announced that the two series would have a crossover event. "This image of Spock having to deal with Boimler's exuberance was the first thing that popped into my head when I heard about it."

Movie Magic

"First Contact is one of my top two favorite *Star Trek* films," begins painter Brad Jenkins. "I've always

09

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09 An imagined TOS/*Lower Decks* crossover from artist Sean McMahon

10 Worf, re-imagined by Sean McMahon

11 Quite the collection! But is it the biggest?

12 Mary Fan with late Star Trek legend, Nichelle Nichols...

13 ... and Nichelle with Doug Ray Maulden-Locke's family, who much admired the actress

been fascinated by the power dynamics of the triumvirate of the Queen, Data, and Picard. The other painting is of one of the best moments from *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* or any of the films really. I can't look at this painting and not think, *Target that explosion and fire!*"

Star Trek was an important part of Brad's rural North Carolina upbringing. "[*Star Trek*] helped me to not feel like such an outcast. I was bullied mercilessly as a little closeted gay kid and *Star Trek* taught me that my 'different' is important and valuable and wonderful and so is yours," details Brad. "As I've gotten older *Star Trek* has helped me to keep an open mind and to love people, and to especially love people because of who they are."

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DIVINE TREASURY

Unveiling the treasured acquisitions of dedicated *Star Trek* collectors..

Community Collecting

"The thing I love most about *Star Trek* is rewatching the episodes and films as a source of comfort from anxiety," shares Liz, a fan who enjoys collecting *Trek* memorabilia as much as tuning in to their favorite episodes. "There's nothing like putting on "Bride of Chaotica!" after a rough day and getting back a sense of calm and enjoyment."

Liz's astounding collection is as varied as it is organized. Action figures, bobbleheads, prop replicas, model starships, posters, slippers, and other miscellaneous treasures adorn their shelves, but one quickly notices that these precious items are categorized by series and character. From numerous sections devoted to The Original Series to other areas that focus on *Voyager*, Worf, La Forge, and even the Borg, Liz's archival skills are on full display.

"I have been a fan of *Star Trek* my entire life and began collecting the toys and other memorabilia about 20 years ago because it's a way to hold on to and have a tactile connection to the fandom that I love so much," says Liz. "It has also been a great way to meet the community of *Trek* collectors and form bonds with those who share the toy hunting experience."

AWAY MISSIONS

Reporting on fan encounters with *Star Trek* celebrities

Honoring an Icon

"Meeting Nichelle Nichols, even for just a few moments, was truly an honor," says Mary Fan of the late, great *Star Trek* legend. "She was the epitome of elegance and kindness, welcoming all her fans with a ready smile and a Vulcan salute… you can totally see on my face how happy I was to meet her."

Family Reunion

"Uhura meant so much to her because she showed the world that a Black woman can do everything a White woman can do," relays Doug Maulden-Locke about his mother-in-law Pamela's love for Nichelle Nichols. "She opened the doors of evolution for women everywhere." Several years ago, the family surprised Pamela with a Nichelle photo op. "We also brought our daughter, Mya, and it became a multi-generational moment for the women in our family."

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OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Star Trek cast members brief fans about their passions, projects, personal hobbies, and more.

Getting Creative with Jess Danecker

Jess Danecker is best known to *Strange New Worlds* fans for her character Cadet Chia's tragic encounter with the Gorn, but the actor's well of talent runs incredibly deep. "I was born and raised in Niagara Falls," Danecker begins. "I actually played competitive soccer from the time I was eight until I was fifteen. In high school, I suffered an ankle sprain during our opening game of the season, and then was out of commission for the remainder," she shares. "It was pretty awful at the time, but in turn it led to quitting soccer and finally pursuing my interest in theatre. So in a weird way, I couldn't be more grateful."

The hard work paid off with her role in *Star Trek*, and Danecker hopes to keep pursuing demanding roles within the sci-fi and supernatural realm. "I'd love to be a part of high-intensity, suspenseful series," she elaborates, citing shows like *Black Mirror* and *Stranger Things*. "I hope to be a part of projects that bring visibility to real stories and issues. Also, I'd love to do period pieces, tell stories based on true events and real people. I think that would be so incredibly cool."

Danecker's creativity doesn't stop there, as she has a strong love for music, modeling, and coffee culture. She's passionate about causes such as mental health awareness and education equality and accessibility, and hopes to advocate as she advances her career. As far as her *Star Trek* future, Danecker quips, "I'm so grateful for the enthusiasm fans had for Chia, even with limited screen time. Seeing people post about the character and even how they felt she had an undeserved demise- every comment and tweet made me smile. I guess we'll have to see what happens."

BY CALUM COLLINS

STRANGE NEW WORLDS

OUR *SNW*-THEMED WORDSEARCH WILL HAVE YOU AT WARP IN NO TIME!

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01. ENTERPRISE
02. NYOTA UHURA
03. NUMBER ONE
04. PIKE
05. ORTEGAS
06. HEMMER
07. CHAPEL
08. GORN
09. M'BENGA
10. SPOCK

1 – 7: Clean up cadet, you're on punishment detail with La'an.

8 – 15: You're learning a thing or two, just like Uhura.

16 – 20: Enterprise Bingo!

To Boldly Quote

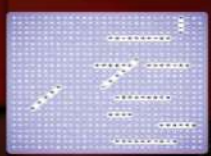
"Jim was always at the top of his class. He's smart and highly skilled, obviously. But he's not above relying on *charm* or even *luck*."

"Your first pony was named *Sir Neighs-A-Lot*. He broke his leg in a rainstorm. Your parents had to put him down. And you cried for a week. Ever tell anybody that?"

"The *Gorn*? Really? We're out here fighting the *boogeyman*? No one has even seen one, so how are we supposed to take them on?"

Spock the Difference

Wordsearch



Answers: Score 1 point for each correct answer.

SPOCK THE DIFFERENCE

Something very strange is happening on the *Enterprise* – some force that has transformed it into a magical kingdom! Can you spot the differences?

TO BOLDLY QUOTE

IT'S AN ALL-NEW SHOW FULL OF FAMILIAR FACES AND QUOTES! CAN YOU FILL IN THE BLANKS TO COMPLETE THEM?

"JIM WAS ALWAYS AT THE TOP OF HIS CLASS. HE'S SMART AND HIGHLY SKILLED, OBVIOUSLY. BUT HE'S NOT ABOVE RELYING ON_____. OR EVEN _____."

SAM KIRK

"YOUR FIRST PONY WAS NAMED_____. HE BROKE HIS LEG IN A RAINSTORM. YOUR PARENTS HAD TO PUT HIM DOWN. AND YOU CRIED FOR A WEEK. EVER TELL ANYBODY THAT?"

ADMIRAL PIKE

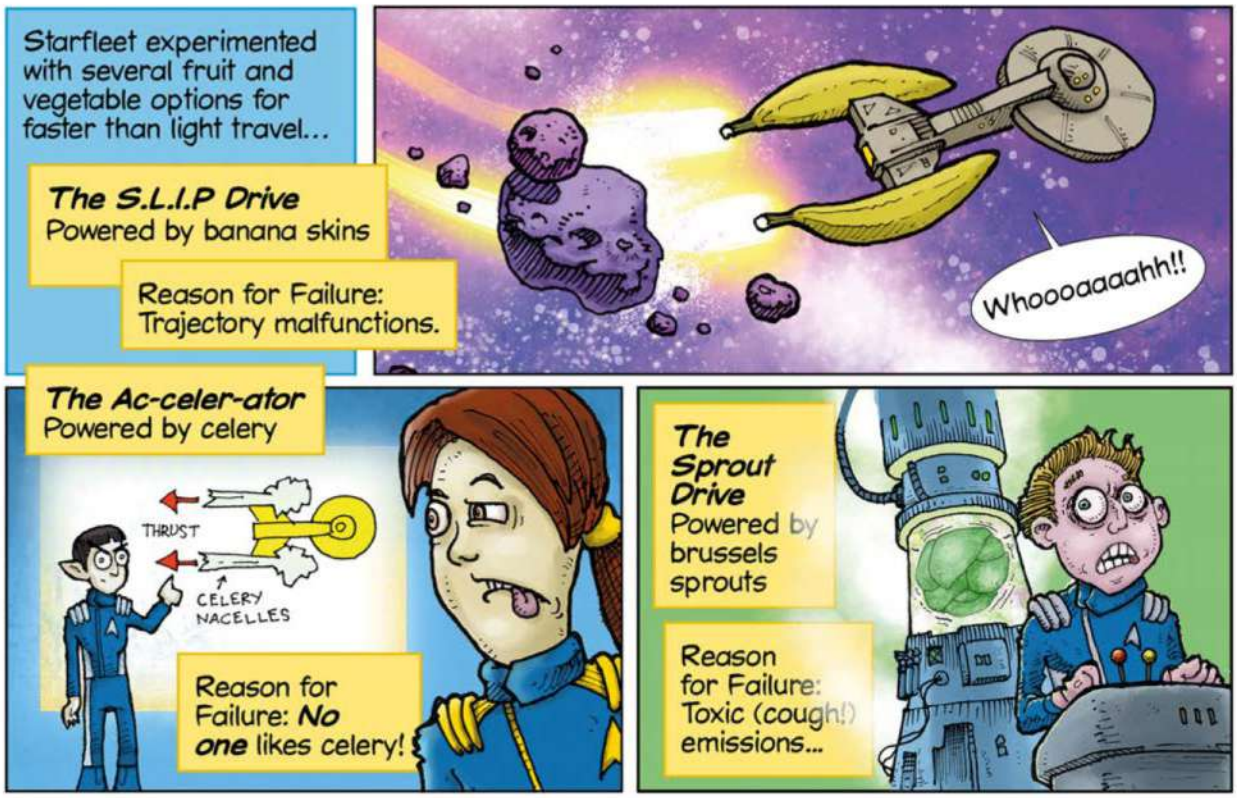
"THE_____ ?REALLY? WE'RE OUT HERE FIGHTING THE_____? NO ONE HAS EVEN SEEN ONE, SO HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TAKE THEM ON?"

ORTEGAS

THE WARPED FACTOR

Banana Factor 9?! (or How the Spore Drive Won the Space Race)

by Coop


Starfleet experimented with several fruit and vegetable options for faster than light travel...
The S.L.I.P Drive
Powered by banana skins
Reason for Failure: Trajectory malfunctions.
Whoooaaaahh!!
The Ac-celer-ator
Powered by celery
THRUST
CELERY NACELLES
Reason for Failure: No one likes celery!
The Sprout Drive
Powered by brussels sprouts
Reason for Failure: Toxic (cough!) emissions...

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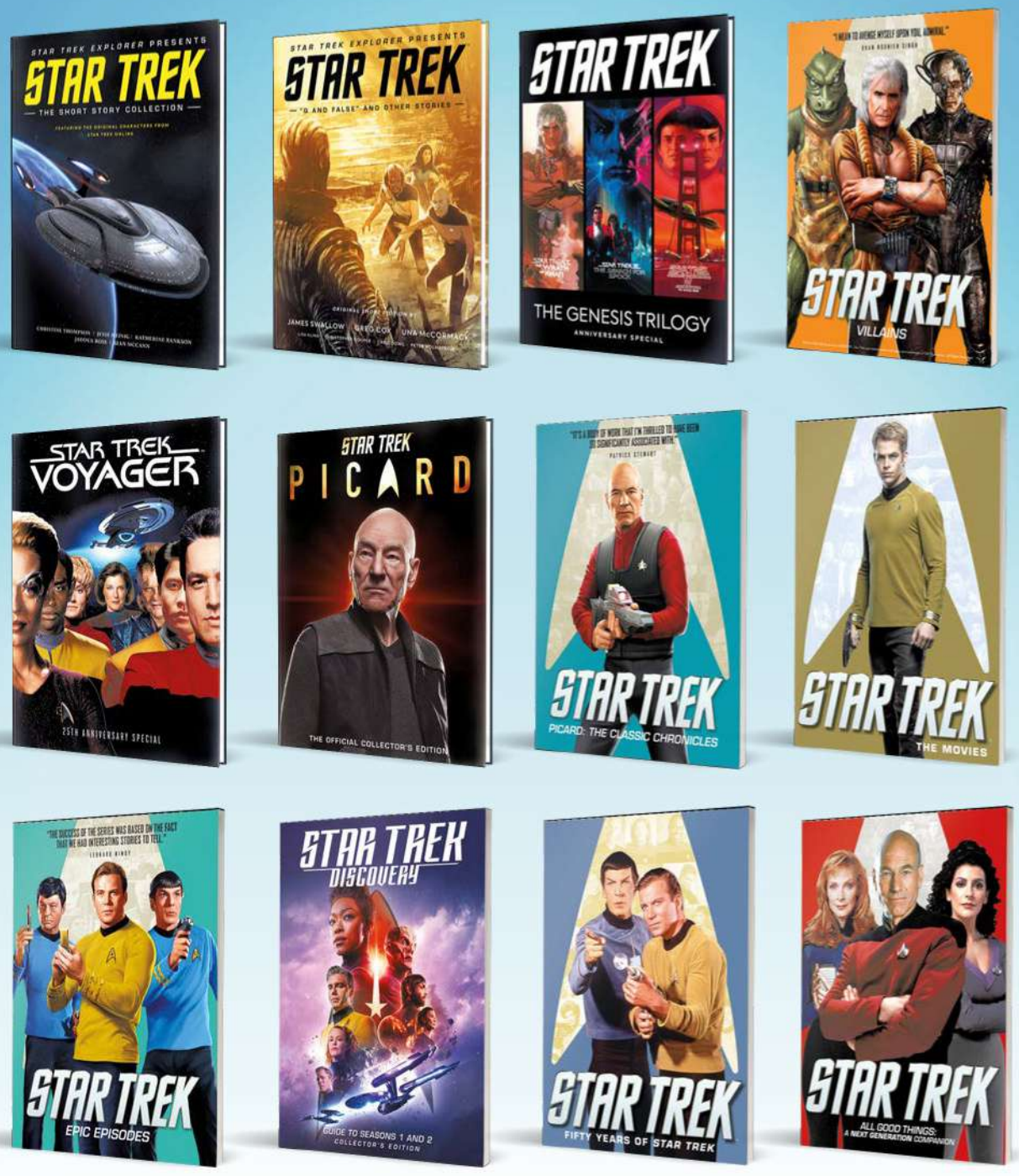

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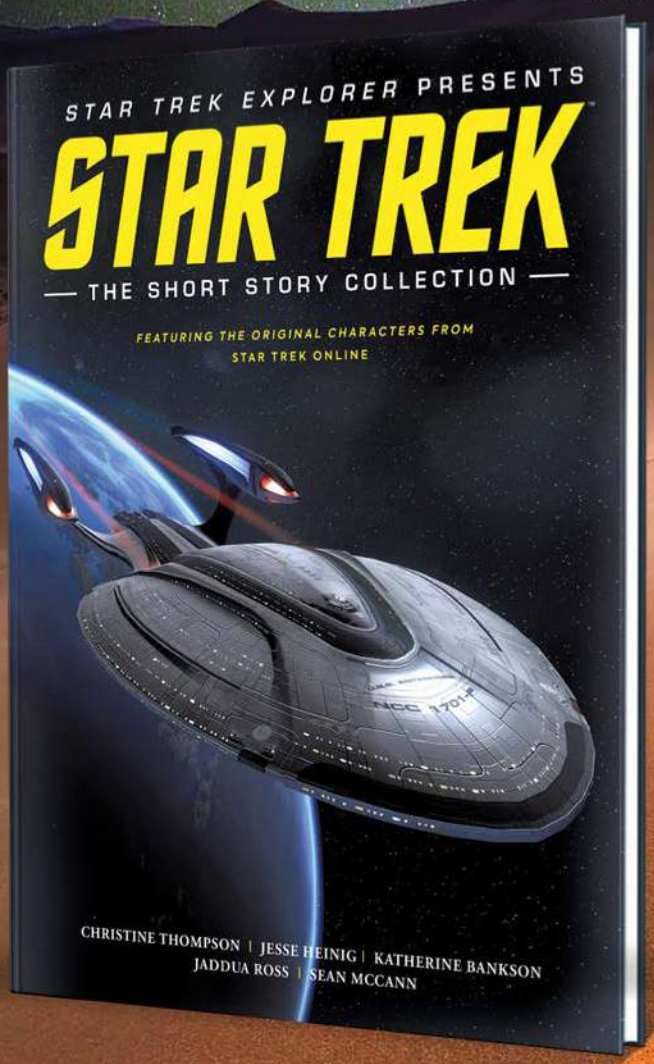
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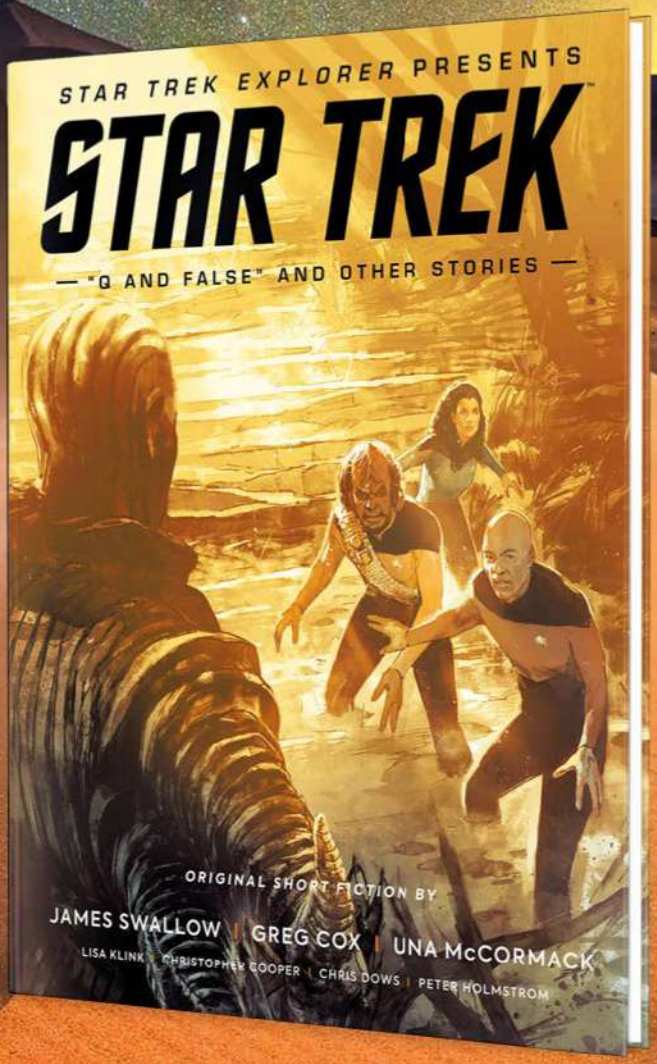
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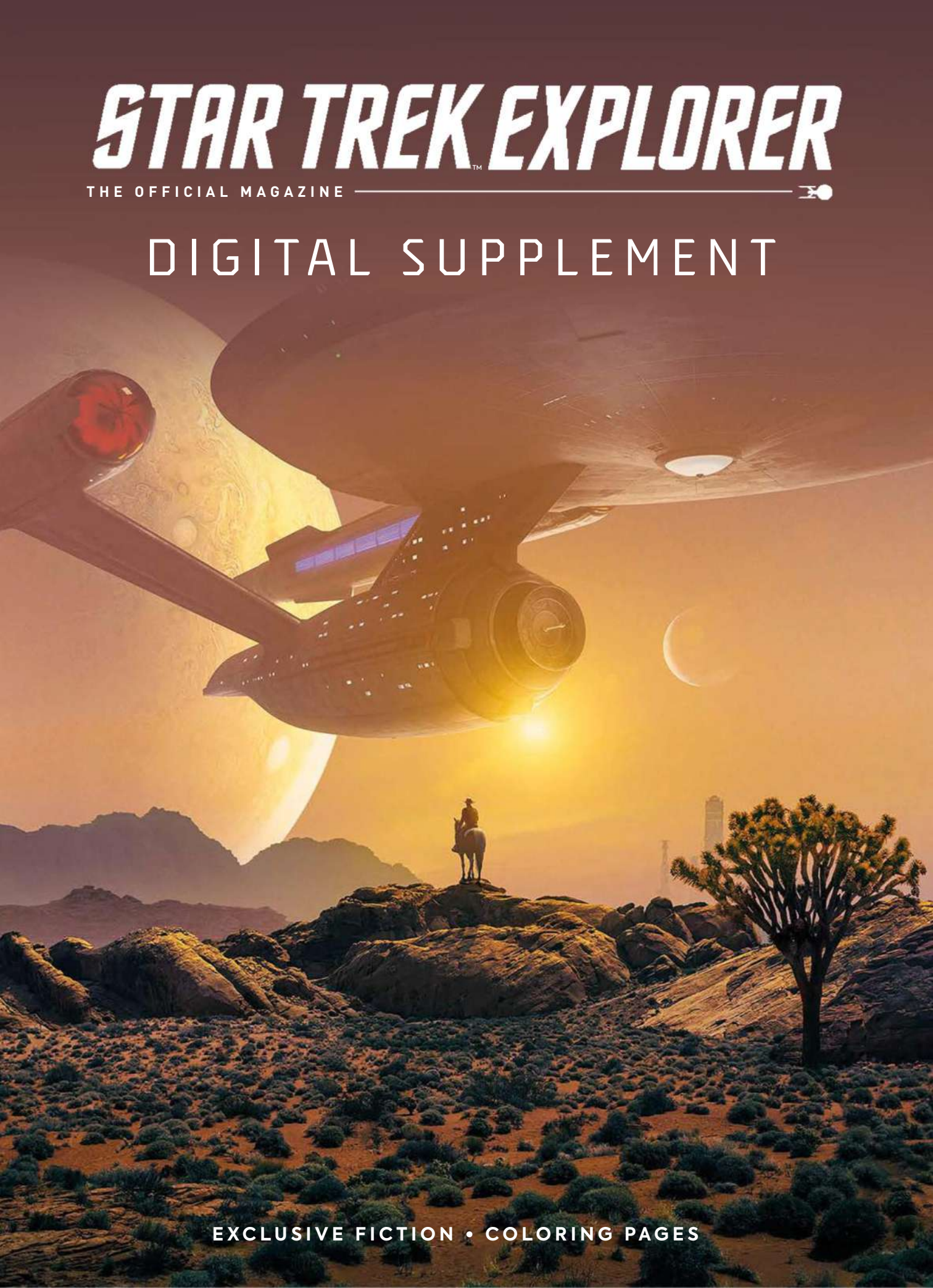

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Captain's Log

Welcome to the fifth issue of your exclusive *Star Trek: Explorer* digital supplement!

This latest edition features two very different *Star Trek* stories by acclaimed author Gary Russell, a name some of you may recognise as the script editor on two *Doctor Who* spin-off series, *The Sarah Jane Adventures* and *Torchwood*, one a chilling encounter with the Borg, the other taking us far back in time, revealing the origins of a classic original series adventure.

We hope you like the line art we've included, too. Print them out or color them in on your tablet, and flex your creative muscles.

Engage!

John Freeman
Editor

STAR TREK EXPLORER

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EXCLUSIVE FICTION

The Expert

STORY: GARY RUSSELL

Max Thomssen knew things were bad, because everything was dark. Life aboard a starship was never dark. There were always bright lights and glows.

Right now, there wasn't even a flash from the comms unit on the wall or the reassuring glow from the food replicator over by the table. Everything was in total blackness.

He could feel his kid sister squirming against him. She was scared, and didn't want to be there. She wanted to be with Dad. Max didn't blame her, but he knew it was his job to look after her right now.

"It's going to be fine," he whispered to her, "If it's going to be fine," Tori hissed back, "why are we whispering?"

"That's a good point, well made," was the best Max could come back with.

"Where's Dad gone?" Tori mumbled.

Max looked up at the door, wishing he knew the answer. Or at least had an answer that would reassure Tori. He needed to distract her, calm her down. He'd seen Dad do that often enough.

"Look, see, on the table. When he came off-shift earlier, he got The Project out. We were planning to do some more work on it tonight."

"Stupid Project," Tori muttered, 'You're *always* doing stupid Projects."

Max knew she was only really unimpressed by the "Projects" because she realized that each time Dad got it onto the table, it meant it was her bedtime. That was the great thing about being fourteen now, Max thought. He didn't have to go to bed when eleven-year-olds did.

"You should just use relocators," Tori said.

"That's hardly the point, "replied Max, gradually moving towards the Project, which meant Tori had to move, too. He'd got her mind off the darkness. He could almost hear his dad saying that, right now, Max had to be the adult in the room.

"This time, we're building a scale model of the *Lalo*," he said. "Together. Out of materials we can get from aboard the ship. A model of the ship, made by actual parts from the ship, is fun."

Tori was staring at it. "I can see the insides. That's... weird." She looked at her brother with a small smile. "You're weird, too."

She was clearly feeling better. "It's called a skeletal model," Max started to explain. "You can see the insides, because I know everything about this ship. I've studied all the specs of the *Lalo*, well, all the Mediterranean class ships, and -"

"You've missed a bit. There, I can see through to the other side..."

Max nodded. "That's because as we

were doing this, I realized the Mediterranean class ships have a design flaw." He felt Tori tense. "Not a bad one," he quickly added. "Just an incidental one, one that doesn't really matter. You see the junction where the conduits on Deck 8 meet the conduits on Deck 9?"

Tori shook her head, but Max pushed on. "The structural integrity is weaker but only needs a slight adjustment and -"

"Like I said. *Weird*."

And with that, Tori went and sat on the floor by the door, looking out into the dark corridor. And shivered. "I wish Mom was here."

Max sighed. He did too, but Lori had been a bit too young to clearly remember the holiday on Risa.

Before ... well, whatever had happened. Max didn't understand either to be truthful, but they had come away from Risa without their family intact, and now only saw Mom twice a year.

As he and Dad had started work on the model of the *Lalo* a few weeks back, it had crossed Max's mind for the first time that Dad still wore the wedding band with its Celtic inscription. He wondered if Mom still wore hers. He'd check next time he saw her.

"Did I tell you about the time I heard Dad tell Chief Engineer P'uruss about that? He was really interested too. Dad took me to meet him, and I explained that I knew pretty much everything about most starships. From the Galaxies and Ambassadors to freight-carriers like the *Lalo*. Dad told him

I could probably find every bulkhead junction and conduit interface aboard the *Lalo* with my eyes shut."

"And can you?"

"Course."

"Show off."

"Dad even told him about my concerns about the integrity of the bulkheads on Decks 8 and 9 to Chief Engineer P'uruss."

"What did she say?"

Max was going to exaggerate, but Tori wasn't stupid, she'd see through that. "She said she'd look into it and that I should carry on my studies."

Tori laughed. "Hah, you mean you got ignored."

Max didn't mind, Lori was laughing for the first time since she'd been woken up by the same thing that had sent Dad back to his science station on Deck 6 - a message demanding all duty officers to report to their stations. Seconds later, the red alert sirens had gone off and Max could feel the ship had gone to high warp with a real jerk. Dad had grabbed his hand, given it a strong squeeze as he'd said 'I better go see what's going on, back soon. Stay here and look after your sister."

And Dad had dashed away.

Max could still feel the slight pressure of that wedding band against his own small fingers. Max wasn't silly enough to believe in things science couldn't prove, yet something instinctively told him this wasn't a training exercise. He couldn't hear any chatter on the comms unit, meaning everyone was either keeping very quiet, which was unlikely, or only using secure channels, keeping information away from the lower decks and civilians aboard.

And then the lights had gone out. Not with a flicker, not even with an electrical bang, they'd just – gone off.

And sleepy Tori had toppled over, as something seemed to stop the ship in mid-warp, and brought it to a sudden stop. Max wondered if they'd hit anything, but no decompression warnings were sounding; no cold, calm computer voice telling everyone not to worry, and therefore making them both worry ten times more.

Instead, it was dark, cold and silent. The doors jammed open onto the corridor outside.

"It's getting cold," Tori said now, bringing Max back into the moment.

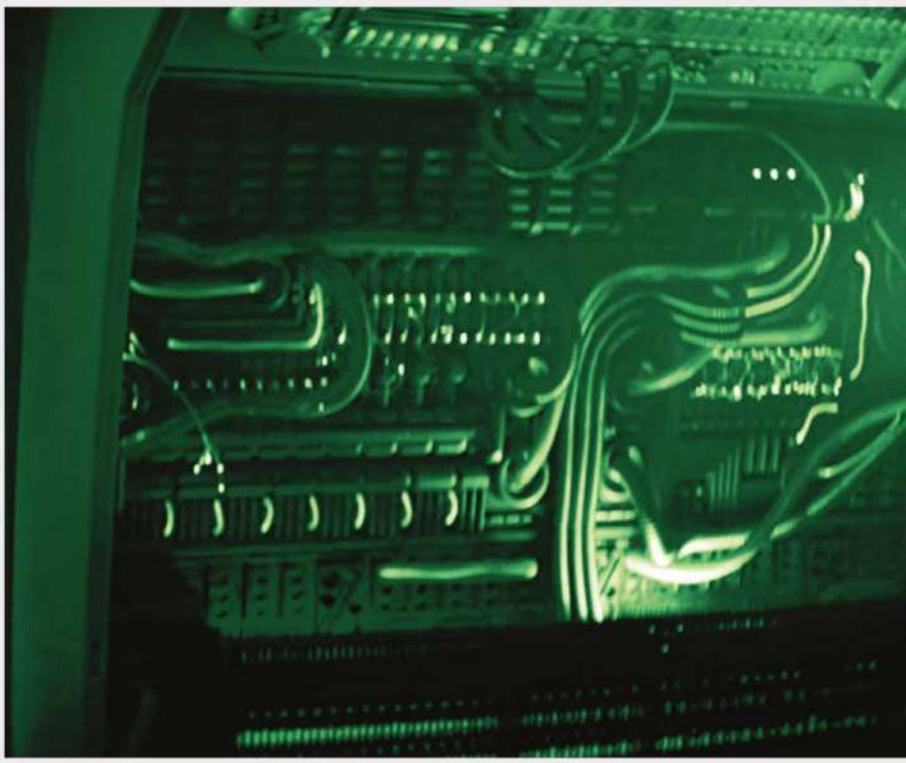
"Yeah," he agreed, but didn't add that he suspected that meant things like life support were starting to be given a lower priority. Something big had to be happening.

"Perhaps we hit something in space. Like an asteroid," Tori said.

Max shrugged. "Maybe".

"We should find Dad."

"He'll be busy," said Max, but realized Tori needed to think reassuring things. So he glanced



"SUDDENLY TORI SQUEALED AS ANOTHER JOLT SHOOK THE SHIP. AND MAX KNEW WHAT THAT WAS – THE LALO WAS FIRING ITS PHASERS."

over at the scale model of the *Lalo* on the tabletop, and closed his eyes, mentally travelling through the ship they had built so accurately, so precisely. They were on Deck 12. His father would be on Deck 6. And there, between them, Max's pet project: "the weaknesses in the plating on Decks 8 and 9 due to the inclusion of too many conduits meeting at the same point on both decks which weakens both the floors and bulkheads of the decks," as he had told Chief P'uruss.

This wasn't a problem on most of the other classifications of Starfleet ships, because they had their nacelles above not below the main structure. But when building so many models of different ships and space stations over the past few years, Max had realized that the Mediterranean class ships had this unique limitation.

Max couldn't actually prove that it was the position of the nacelles that caused the potential stress fracture, but it was a project he wanted to explore more. Although it puzzled Max that the new *California*-class ships, which also had lower nacelles, didn't seem to replicate the fault, which meant it could be something else.

Suddenly Tori squealed as another jolt shook the ship. And Max knew what that was – the *Lalo* was firing its phasers.

Why?

Max told Tori they should head to their father's workstation now. Tori agreed, saying she didn't feel safe trapped in the quarters anymore.

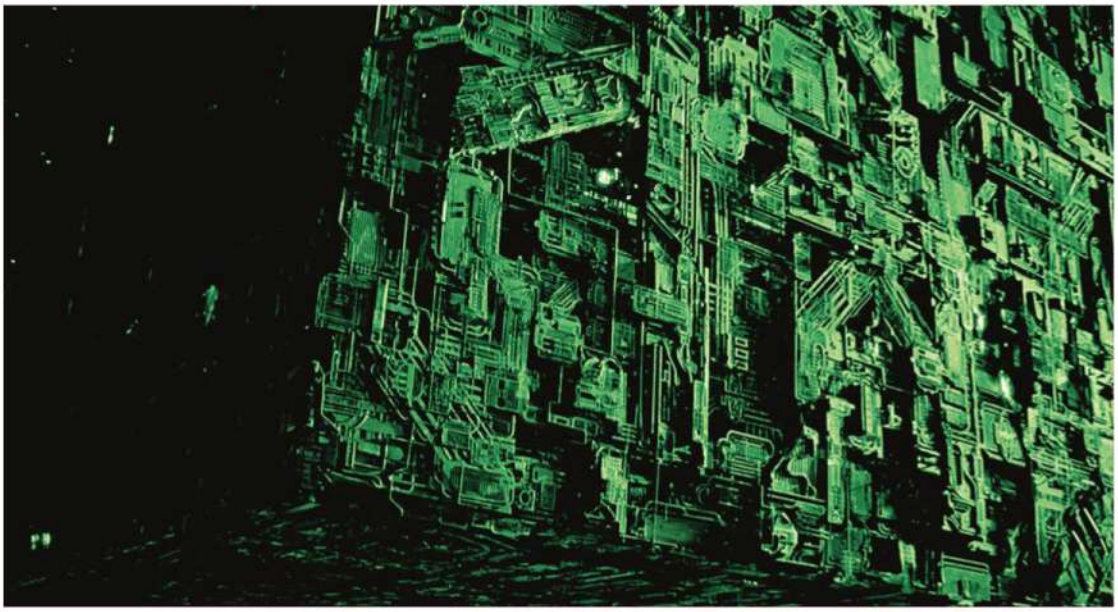
Max gave one last look at in the model of the *Lalo*. One last chance to memorize all the corridors and junctions and turbolift shafts.

The corridor was dark, but now he could hear sounds, most of which were distant bangs. Then a flash of white and yellow from around a corner and Max felt something rush through his body. Adrenaline. But fear? Excitement? Bewilderment? He pushed those questions down and moved towards the light source, gently encouraging Tori all the time, always making sure she was safe.

As they reached the end of the corridor at a T-junction, Max realized it was a plasma fire, a breach on the corridor wall was pumping hot plasma everywhere, so he led Tori in the opposite direction.

This would lead to turbolift J – and an emergency stairwell. Never use the lifts in an emergency, Dad had always said.

A door was open to one of the Upper Freight Holds. Max glanced in - no one was there, but this room had



"AT FIRST, HE THOUGHT IT WAS A WEIRD SQUARE SPACE-STATION, PERHAPS SOMETHING NEW THAT'D BEEN BUILT IN THE BETA QUADRANT. BUT THEN IT MOVED."

a window to the outside.

And Max gasped in surprise.

Off to the side of the ship was something he'd never seen before. At first, he thought it was a weird square space-station, perhaps something new that'd been built in the Beta Quadrant. But then it moved.

"It's a ship," Tori gasped, and Max quickly got her away from the window. He didn't have a clue what the strange square block was, but he had realized that it was what his ship was firing at.

"C'mon."

Another hit, and the Lalo really rocked this time. With a cry, Tori toppled and went sprawling along the floor, which was now at a sharp angle. Furious with himself for losing her grip, Max grabbed her arm and she yelped at the force. But Max didn't have time to apologize.

He closed his eyes, working out the quickest route to Deck 6, counting off bulkheads and Jeffries Tubes in his mind. It didn't have to be the 'right' route, the 'approved' one, it just had to be the quickest, and, if someone yelled at him later, well tough.

The *Lalo* shook again, but this was no explosion nearby.

"Tractor beam," Max yelled.

Then he realized something. That weakness in Decks 8 and 9. If the attackers could be made to use their tractor beam there, the hull would buckle, yes, but then the tractor beam would very soon have nothing to grip. It was their only hope - and only Max had realized this.

He needed a comms unit. He needed to contact Dad. No, he needed to contact the Bridge.

But power was out, so even if he could find one, it would be useless.

As Max turned to tell Tori his plan, he felt a massive wave of heat wash over him, and he was on his knees. Tori was crying now. "Where's everyone else?"

But Max was worried about the explosion.

Another plasma fire, this one just behind them, had consumed the entire corridor.

The flames were rolling towards them.

They had to move.

"Run, Tori, run!"

He ran, almost dragging Tori behind him, this time determined not to let go of her.

And then it struck him. Tori was right, they simply hadn't seen anyone else. Was everyone on this deck... dead?

Dad!

Dad couldn't be …

No, of course not. Dad would be fine. And he'd listen to Max and find a way to maneuver the ship, so the tractor beam would hit the right point on Decks 8 and 9.

Max was right, there was a stairwell here. They needed to go down and he got Tori to go first. They just needed to get down to De-

When Max woke up, he had no idea how much time had passed, he could only guess that the ship had been hit again and something had blown up, knocking him sideways into a corridor.

Where was Tori? She wasn't there with him. Had she kept going towards Deck 6? Towards Dad. He hoped so. Max tried to get his bearings, work out where he was. Shouldn't be difficult, he told himself. You're the genius, you're the expert in all things *Lalo*. He staggered up and

realized quickly that he was indeed on Deck 9, three decks away from Dad. He spent a few more minutes searching for Tori, but no, she had kept going. Good for her, it was the right thing to do.

As Max walked forwards, towards where he knew another stairwell down would be, he could hear people. Not shouting, not yelling, just murmuring. He couldn't work out what they were saying. So he moved towards the sounds.

And stopped.

These weren't people. These were... something else. Dressed in black, with grey skin and weird tubes and metal and... there was one whose left arm was actually some kind of metallic claw-like device. One of them turned towards where Max was now hiding, just at the edge of the corridor. A thin laser beam of light strafed the wall and after it vanished, Max gave a careful glance round. The light was coming from an eye-piece, over one of the invader's eyes.

Max looked closer and gasped. These weren't just the black-clad invaders. There were Starfleet crew and officers, as well! Chief Engineer P'uress was there, similar implants attached to her leg and face. How'd they managed to do this so quickly? Max guesstimated it had been maybe thirty minutes since the first warning, since Dad had gone to his station. Whoever these people... these creatures were, they moved fast. What were they doing to the crew?

Max stepped back.

And a hand grabbed his shoulder. He knew it was Dad. He could recognize that grip anywhere. And yes there, on the hand, was the ring. The wedding band with Celtic inscriptions.

"Dad!" Max cried.

And stopped.

Dad was staring at him. One shoulder was covered in silver machinery. Was he hurt? Had the doctor patched him up? Then, Max realized Dad's right eye was covered in a patch that was clicking and whirring. And three thin black tubes were linking his neck to the back of his head.

"Dad?"

"You understand this Starfleet ship," said Dad. But it didn't sound like Dad.

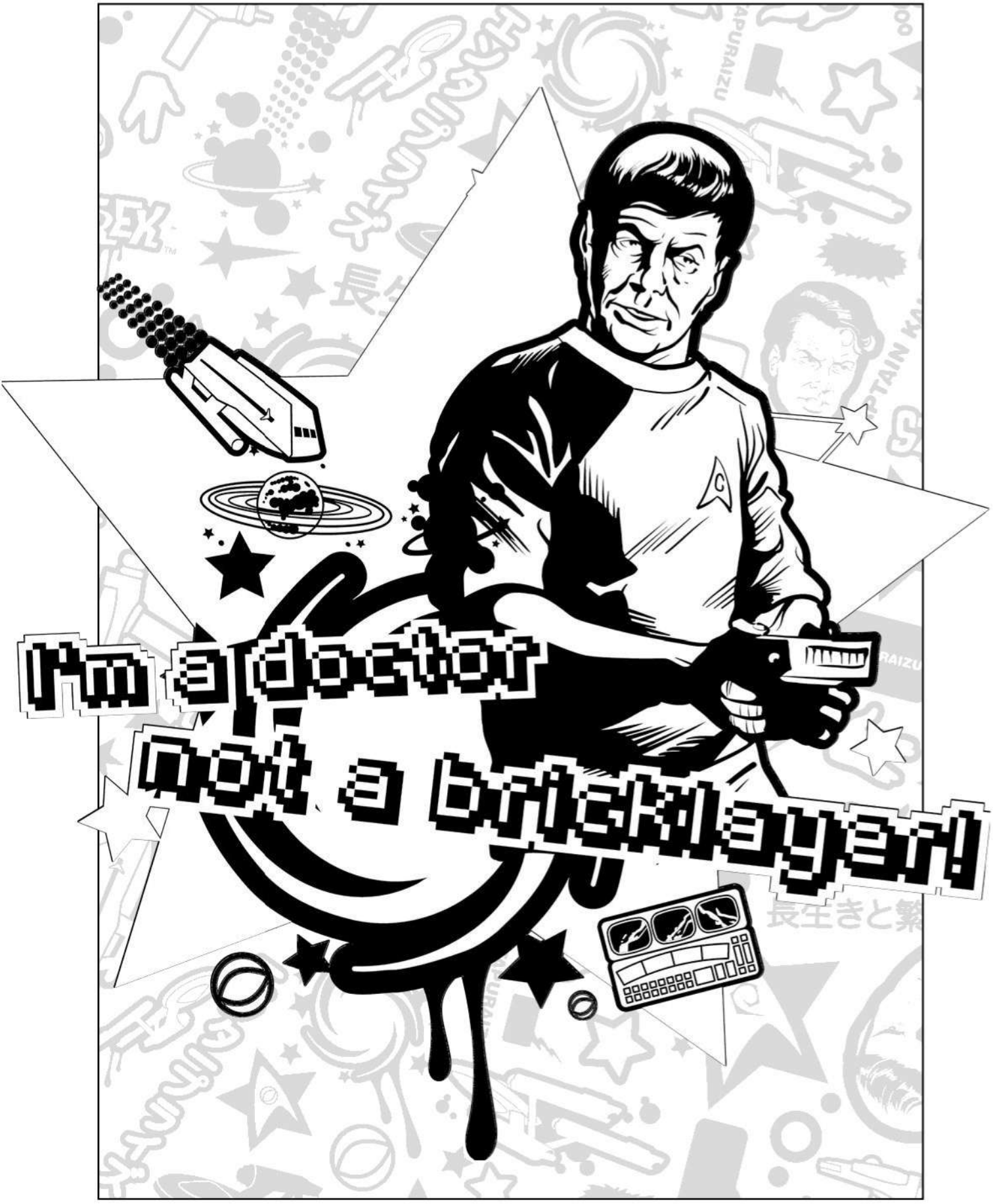
And a thin back tube emerged from Dad's finger and stabbed into the back of Max's hand. Max tied to pull away, but his father's grip was too tight, and Max started to feel his legs give way.

"Dad…" he wanted to scream, but his mouth didn't work.

"Resistance is futile," said the voice coming from Dad's mouth. But it wasn't his Dad's. It wasn't a voice Max had ever heard before. And it seemed to echo inside his head.

"Your knowledge of Starfleet ship design will be added to our own."

The last thing Max saw was the wedding band on his dad's finger. And he knew he'd never find out if Mom still wore hers…



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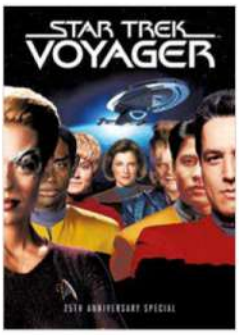

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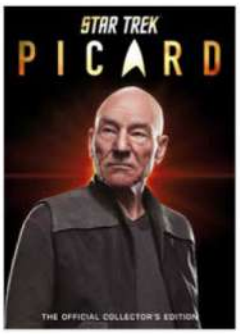

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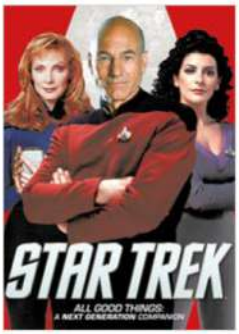

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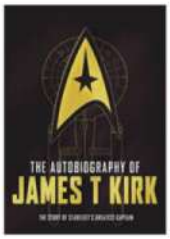

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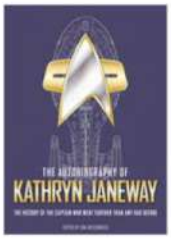

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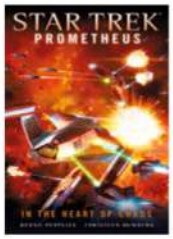

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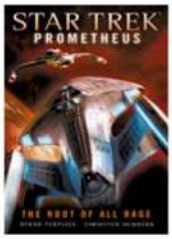

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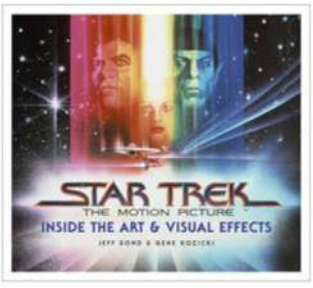

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EXCLUSIVE FICTION

The Guardian

STORY: GARY RUSSELL

"We made this happen. We are responsible for everything! And now we're paying the price..."

Hob looked around, trying to locate the source of the shouting.

"Stupid fool," muttered Takhen. "He'll bring the Androids down on us in seconds."

Hob nodded. Whoever it was, they needed shutting up, and quickly. For all their sakes.

And in his peripheral vision, he saw a flicker of movement. High above them.

He poked his head round the edge of the doorway, to get a proper view. The yeller was a man in a grey suit, standing atop a burning tower block about thirty meters to their left. Hob couldn't identify him – it was a sad inditement of their situation that frankly anyone still alive in the city should be known to him as there were so few of them left. But the black smoke was obscuring his face.

Hob closed his eyes for a second.

"History will judge us harshly," the man called out. Hob knew he wasn't addressing them directly, he was just screaming out in a sort of primal fear. The sort of rage and frustration the people tended to keep bottled up. But now, as the city died around him, he'd clearly decided he no longer needed to hold it in.

"I think it's Jorel," Hob muttered to Takhen.

"Figures," she grunted back. "Never could use the brains he was born with." She grabbed Hobs arm. "We should go."

"We can't leave him. It's Jorel!"

"Yes we can," Takhen hissed "If he's lost his mind, then he's no use to anyone." She looked Hob straight in the eye. "And while he's screaming his head off, he's a good …"

She turned away, not wanting to finish the thought.

Hob finished it for her, angrily. "Distraction? Target?" He yanked his arm out of her grip. "Is that what we've sunk to? Sacrificing our friends to save our own skins?"

After a beat, Takhen shrugged. "Yes. I want to live. If Jorel doesn't, that's his decision."

Hob suddenly placed his hand on her mouth and eased them forcefully back into the shadows, dropping closer to the floor, pulling Takhen with him.

She understood why.

Striding through the flames on the streets, the smoke, the carnage, were a group of Androids. Five of them. The orange flames reflected off their hairless skulls, their hairless arms and torsos, their entire bodies, making them seem to glow with an inner light; each one androgenous, naked and with the strength and stamina of four or five people like Hob

The Androids were, of course, untouched by the fire. Unhurt by the leaking gases and choking plasma. They walked through it all as they would a forest or a meadow.

In the days when there were forests and meadows on Exo III. Before it all went wrong and civilisation fell.

The Androids were looking up and down, left and right, their nostrils visibly enlarging as they sniffed. Every enhanced sense operating as they sought their prey.

Prey like Hob and Takhen. Prey like Jorel.

They located Jorel when he started yelling again.

"You'd think we'd have known better, but no. We had to prove to ourselves that we were superior to even nature and –"

Jorel stooped suddenly as a charred metal girder penetrated his torso. Hob winced, guessing Jorel was already dead before his legs gave way and he dropped to the burning ground below.

The Android which had thrown the girder was joined by the others, inhumane rictus grins on their faces.

Part of another building finally gave way, and in a flurry of masonry and burning timbers, it collapsed

beside them, one of the Its actually getting buried by some of the molten rubble. A second later, the Android emerged, untouched, unhurt and uninterested in what had happened. They had but one purpose – extermination of everything alive on Exo III, anything that weren't Androids.

Takhen shook her head sadly. "We need to regroup, find other survivors from other cities and countries. Fight back."

Hob laughed, mirthlessly. "I'm beginning to think you and I may well be it. Lowter and the Rori brothers were supposed to meet us an hour ago."

"You think they aren't coming?"

Hob shrugged. "I think they are dead. Like Jorel. The Androids aren't leaving anything alive.

He grabbed Takhens hand. "Let's go. If we're going to die, I'd rather do it trying to escape. Trying to survive, rather than waiting here for inevitable discovery."

Takhen swallowed hard, then nodded. "We should head out into the wastelands, beyond the city rims. The caves, other survivors will have gone there."

"To where it all began? Why?"

Takhen started to move. "Because the Androids won't expect to us to go there. It's not… logical, or sensible. People like Lowter know how they think… she worked with them long enough. She said to me once it was an obvious place for people to hide.'

Hob wanted to argue, but knew he couldn't – he simply had no other suggestions. Instead, he nodded and together they moved slowly and silently through the wreckage of their once beautiful city.

Hours later, Hob and Takhen finally allowed themselves to rest, in a small copse of trees on the edge of the wastelands.

They looked back at the night sky above the city which was just one huge blur of orange, red and yellow as the whole place burned down.

Hob realised Takhen was crying, quietly. She'd been holding it in check for hours, knowing that something as natural as sobbing would be heard by the Androids astonishing hearing.

He touched her shoulder, but she shrugged it off. 'I'm okay, she said. "I'm just…"

"Sad?"

"Angry. Bitter." She rounded on him, as if it was all Hob's fault. "Look at us, look at our civilisation. Because of the Androids, we have no future. You and the other Exo Municipals decreed this, you gave them the power."

Hob shook his head. "That's not true, it was just an experiment…"

"Look at us Hob. Even if we

"WE NEED TO REGROUP, FIND OTHER SURVIVORS FROM OTHER CITIES AND COUNTRIES. FIGHT BACK."

survive the night, what's the point? We thought we could overcome the sterility, find a new way to prolong existence, keep our planet alive, even without children, but now...? Maybe Jorel was right. We did this to ourselves." And with a venom Hob hadn't anticipated, she slapped him around the face. "*You* did this. Our precious leaders. And where are we now? Our entire civilisation erased by your hubris."

"That's not fair…" Hob started to say, but the look Takhen gave him made him realise it was safer to let her vent all that anger and fury.

"Create new bodies for ourselves, you lot all said. Give ourselves immortality. Think of it, we can have time to let the fields regrow, let the rivers refill. No need to exhaust our resources. Become Androids for a few centuries. Let the planet heal and make it a place to welcome the future later. But first, give them autonomy, because we need them to help us take those first few stumbling steps... never foreseeing they would turn on us, like ungrateful children we could never have."

Takhen wasn't even addressing Hob now, he could see that. She was just saying aloud what she had wanted to say years ago, when he'd come home, explaining the Municipals' decisions. And Takhen, who Hob knew had always wanted children with him, had accepted the decisions for the sake of society.

Now she was saying what hundreds, possible thousands of their now dead friends and colleagues, strangers and unknowns had all been thinking for years.

And maybe she was right. But that didn't change what had happened.

"Come on then," Takhen suddenly said.

"What?"

"Let's find the caves, find the catacombs where it all began. See if Lowter was right."

And she was moving again, further out of the copse, and off across the rough wastelands.

Taking a deep breath, and giving a final look at the burning city he knew he'd never come back to, Hob followed his wife into the darkness.

It took two days to reach the cave mouth where it had started, many years ago. Hob and Takhen had rationed the fruits and water they found along the way, knowing food and drink would get more limited, the nearer they got to the catacombs.

Was Takhen ready to drop, he wondered? Hob certainly was, but he knew he needed to appear strong for his wife. He smiled inwardly. Why? Takhen was three times stronger than he was. She was certainly not going to drop. She was Takhen and at that moment, he remembered why he loved her so.

"We have arrived," she announced quietly.

Hob nodded.

Gingerly, they looked inside the cave. It sloped down into wide cavern, high and dimly lit by some flambeaux shoved into the ground. They had burned a long way down, suggesting many days since they were lit.

Sprawled on the ground were twenty or thirty dead bodies.

And sat in the midst, cross-legged was a woman, a plastic cup in her hand.

"Lowter," Takhen breathed and crossed straight to her, picking her way through the dead, managing not to look at them.

In case they were other people she or Hob knew.

Hob followed a few paces behind.

Takhen knelt down to Lowter, shaking her shoulders.

Hob could see foam bubbled and dried around her lips. He finally glanced at the bodies, all of them with the same dried foam. Some had closed their eyes, others were staring upward in death. None of them had died easily.

"Lowter," hissed Takhen, but Hob eased his wife away. "She's dead, too." Hob pointed at the half-full cup in Lowter's hands. "Poison. They all took it."

"But why?"

"Because they knew it was better than the Androids finding them."

Hob stared further in the darkness, down into the deep catacombs where it had all started years before. "I'm going to see what's still down there," he said. "Come on."

But Takhen said no. She was staying here. "With our friends. Our life."

Hob nodded and started to walk, a tear welling up in his eye.

He heard Takhen cough, she tried to keep it in but unsuccessfully. Then Hob heard the cup hit the stony ground. He didn't look back. He wanted to remember his wife as she was when alive, not now.

He walked for about half an hour until he found a huge metal door embedded in a rock wall.

He tried to open it, but it wouldn't budge, and in frustration he kicked and punched and thumped and hit and… until exhausted, he dropped to his knees.

Then the door swung open.

Standing there was an Android. Nearly two metres tall, powerful eyes, that familiar sneer, but fully clothed in a robe and sandals.

Untouched by the madness above? Was that possible?

"Who are you?" its voiced boomed.

"Hob," Hob replied.

"You are a master?"

"I am the last of them. Everyone is dead."

The Android lifted Hob up and brought him into the chamber. High-tech equipment everywhere, the most sophisticated machines imaginable. Hob's eyes settled on a circular table, large enough for him and Takhen to sleep upon.

"That was the idea," he mumbled, wondering if somewhere in eternity, Takhen might still hear

"THE MACHINERY CANNOT FAIL. RUK IS THE GUARDIAN OF THE MACHINERY. RUK ENSURES THE MACHINERY CAN NEVER FAIL."

him. "We were going to create new bodies for ourselves instead of children. Bodies that needed no food, no water, no sleep. Bodies that would not destroy the planet any more through rapacious greed and desire.' Hob laughed and patted the Android guardian's arm. "Instead, my friend, we created you to care for us. The advance guard, the guardians, until we were ready."

The Android seemed to be considering Hob's words. "What do you want me to do, Master?"

Hob stared at the machinery, looking for something, a specific switch he recalled one of the Municipals insisting on. A control only a handful of them even knew had been built. Hob shook his head; it was getting hard to focus. Was all that he had ensured finally catching up with him?

He found the machinery he needed. It was still lit up, and still active. With a grunt, he slammed his hand onto it.

Hob sighed, it was done, the Androids were deactivated - permanently. The experiment was over.

Hob turned and gasped in astonishment. The guardian Android which had let him in was still standing, head slightly cocked as if trying to work put what had happened. "Either the machinery failed –" Hob started, but was interrupted.

"The machinery cannot fail. Ruk is the guardian of the machinery. Ruk ensures the machinery can never fail."

Hob shrugged. "In that case, Ruk, we must be so far below ground that the signal I sent out can't penetrate these catacombs. I suggest you never go beyond the cave entrance, or it might deactivate you too."

Hob looked around. "Guard this well, Ruk. One day someone will come. Maybe a survivor from above, from somewhere else on Exo III. One day this equipment may save someone's life."

"It could save yours," Ruk said.

Hob shook his head. "I don't deserve an android body, my friend. Promise me, promise me you'll protect everything here."

"Ruk promises the Master."

"Thank you, Ruk." Hob smiled, closed his eyes… and let the darkness take him for the last time.

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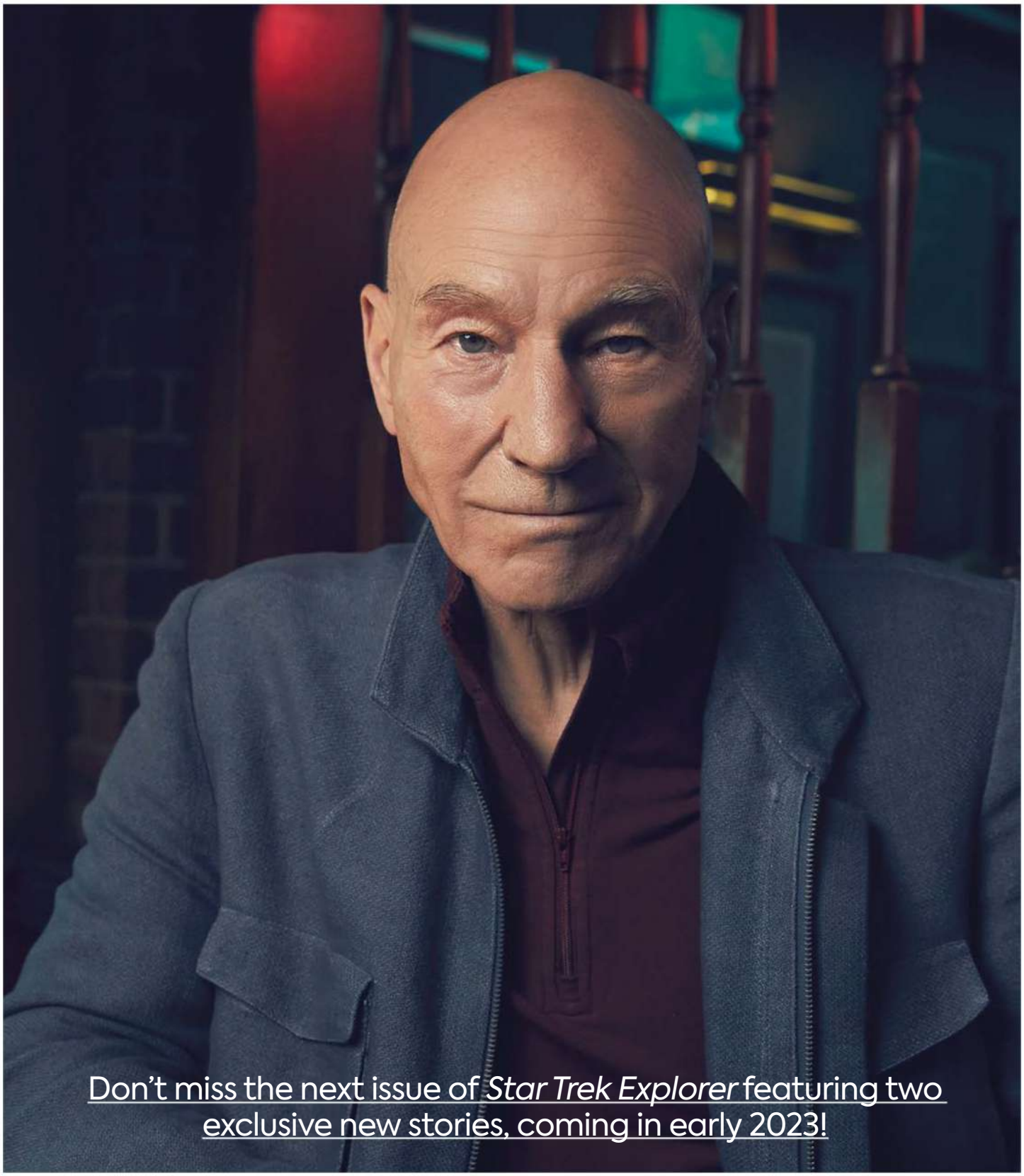

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